



Glossary of Postal Terms

Publication 32

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- A. Purpose.** This glossary defines words and phrases that are unique to, or have special meanings within, the U.S. Postal Service. Automatic data processing terms that are specific to the Postal Service have also been incorporated. This glossary does not provide comprehensive or precise legal definitions. In any contradiction between a term in this glossary and a Postal Service directive, the directive supersedes the definition.
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- D. Cancellations.** All previous issues of Publication 32 and Publication 32-A are obsolete.
- E. Effective Date.** This publication is effective May 1997.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard D. Weirich".

Richard D. Weirich
Vice President
Information Systems

Glossary of Postal Terms

Publication 32, *Glossary of Postal Terms*, defines words and phrases that are unique to, or have special meanings within, the U.S. Postal Service. This glossary does not provide comprehensive or precise legal definitions. In any contradiction between a term in this glossary and a current USPS directive, the directive supersedes the definition. Publication 32-A, *USPS Glossary of ADP Terms*, is now obsolete. Postal-specific automatic data processing terms have been incorporated into this version of Publication 32.

This glossary was first published in 1974 and has been updated several times since then to reflect the changing terminology and technology within the USPS. Most obsolete terms have been deleted, but others that might still appear in print are retained and cross-referenced to the current term. Moreover, many new terms have been added.

If you wish to suggest a term to be included in future editions, send the term and definition to:

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Capitalization

Terms that are the equivalent of proper names or represent code words are capitalized; terms that are general — applying to a group or category — are not capitalized. For example, the proper names of specific systems, services, and computer programs are capitalized herein, as are the names of specific committees and boards. However, most entries

ending in office, center, facility, or unit, and various descriptive terms ending in delivery and mail, are considered general and are not capitalized.

Position titles are not capitalized, whether the position is held by many (such as clerk) or by few (such as vice president). Organizational unit names, however, are capitalized to distinguish them from the same function (compare Finance with finance).

Trademarks and terms whose registration is pending are always capitalized when used as nouns. (Check *Domestic Mail Manual* G013 for a current list.) Moreover, the abbreviated or acronym form is always capitalized; for example, COD for the term “collect on delivery.”

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Commonly used acronyms are found in parentheses next to the term they represent. In addition, a list of acronyms and the respective terms are found on page 129.

Forms

Forms referenced herein are U.S. Postal Service forms unless otherwise noted.

absentee balloting materials — Postcard applications, ballots, voting instructions, and envelopes sent through the mail without postage prepayment. This public service enables U.S. expatriates, members of the Armed Forces in active service, and the U.S. Merchant Marine (and their spouses and dependents) to apply for registration and to vote when absent from the place of voting residence.

accelerated reply mail (ARM) — Origin caller service, provided at a postal facility other than one to which the caller's mail is addressed, by which courtesy reply mail from the caller's customers is captured by the USPS for either immediate delivery to the caller or reshipment by Express Mail to an address of the caller's choice.

accepts — The total number of mailpieces processed by an optical character reader and assigned to the correct stacker (that is, open bins).

accountable mail — Mail that requires the signature of the addressee or addressee's agent upon receipt to provide proof of delivery or indemnification for loss or damage. This includes Express Mail and special service mail such as certified mail, collect on delivery, insured mail for more than \$50, registered mail and return receipt for merchandise.

accountable materials — Certain items of inherent monetary value. These include postal items such as aerogrammes, international reply coupons, postage stamps, philatelic products, stamped envelopes and postal cards, blank postal money order forms, or any unsold item awaiting destruction. These also include service items provided to the general public in behalf of certain federal agencies such as migratory-bird hunting and conservation stamps. (See also *stamp credit*.)

accountbook — A batch of forms (Form 1551), one for each week of the postal fiscal year. The forms are used to record the daily transactions of post offices and financial reporting units. Moreover, they serve as a single-source document by post offices to accumulate financial data for periodic reporting on the statement of account.

account identifier code (AIC) — A three-digit code that assigns financial transactions to the proper account on the general ledger. Each AIC is assigned a corresponding general ledger.

A

accounting period (AP) — A 4-week period that forms one thirteenth of the postal fiscal year. It begins on a Saturday and ends at the close of business on the Friday 4 weeks later.

accounting service center (ASC) — An accounting, disbursing, and data processing facility that provides accounting support for postal activities. Each ASC is specialized for one or more functions: Minneapolis, MN, payroll; San Mateo, CA, accounts payable and travel vouchers; and St. Louis, MO, postal money orders. (See also *Consumer Service Card* and *National Air and Surface System*.)

account management — The planning, implementation, and measurement of customer service activities for assigned customer accounts. This is required to realize postal volume and revenue potential for these accounts.

account representative — A USPS employee who establishes and maintains communications with customers to improve service, sell postal products, implement programs, and represent customer viewpoints to postal management. (Formerly *customer service representative*.)

Accounts Payable Accounting and Reporting System (APARS) — A software system that provides for processing and reporting of payments made at the San Mateo and St. Louis Accounting Service Centers. APARS supports transactions generated by other ASCs, USPS field operations, and Headquarters.

activity — A named process, function, or task that occurs over time and has recognizable results. Activities use up assigned resources to produce postal products and services. Activities combine to form USPS business processes.

activity analysis — The breakdown of the USPS enterprise into manageable segments for detailed analysis of cost and performance.

activity-based management — A system of management that seeks to optimize the value added activities performed by the USPS enterprise while at the same time minimizing or eliminating the non-value added activities, resulting in overall improvements in the effectiveness and the efficiency of the Postal Service in serving its customers.

activity code — A one-digit number that indicates the functional area in which a USPS employee is assigned; it is usually joined to the two-digit designation code as a second element. (See also *labor distribution code*.)

activity model — A graphical representation of a USPS business process that exhibits the activities that make up the postal business process to any desired level of detail. An activity model reveals the interactions between postal activities in terms of inputs and outputs while showing the controls placed on each activity and the types of resources assigned to each activity.

activity model (AS-IS) — An activity model that portrays how a USPS business process is currently structured. It is used to establish a baseline for subsequent postal business process improvement actions or programs.

activity model (TO-BE) — An activity model that results from a USPS business process redesigned action or program. The TO-BE model shows how the postal business process will function after the improvement action is implemented.

activity, non-value added — Any activity that provides a negative return on the investment or allocation of resources to that activity. Within broad limits, the enterprise benefits by allocating less resources to non-value added activities.

activity, value added — Any USPS activity that contributes directly to the performance of a mission, and could not be eliminated without impairing the mission.

actual count (AC) — The exact numerical count of all mail classes worked.

additional entry (AE) — A post office other than the office of original entry where a publisher is authorized to present copies of nine Periodicals for postal verification.

additional mailing office — A post office, other than the original mailing office, used to mail Nonprofit Standard Mail.

address — The location to which the USPS is to deliver or return a mailpiece. It consists of certain elements such as recipient name, street name and house number, and city, state, and ZIP Code as required by the mail class.

A

Address Change Service (ACS) — An automated process that provides change-of-address information to participating mailers who maintain computerized mailing lists. The information is captured in the Computerized Forwarding System II units and sent to mailers electronically to eliminate manual input of change information into their mailing systems. (See also *change-of-address order*, *forward*, and *National Change of Address System*.)

address correction service — An ancillary service that provides a mailer with the forwarding address of the addressee (if the addressee filed a change-of-address order with the USPS) or the reason for nondelivery. It is available alone or in combination with forwarding and return service. (See also *forward* and *undeliverable as addressed*.)

addressee — The person or organization to whom a mailpiece is addressed as shown in the delivery address.

Address Element Correction — A USPS process that revises incomplete or incorrect computerized address files and then attaches ZIP+4 and carrier route codes. The process uses computer matching of records that cannot be coded with software certified by the Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS).

Address Information System products — USPS addressing products and services used to obtain the correct USPS ZIP Code, ZIP+4, or carrier route number for mailing list addresses. These include computerized products such as the City State File, Five-Digit ZIP Code File, Line-of-Travel (LOT) information, Z4CHANGE File, ZIPMOVE File, Carrier Route Information System, and ZIP+4 tapes. They also include printed ZIP Code and ZIP+4 directories and microfiche products. (See also *Address Management*.)

address list service — (See *mailing list service*.)

Address Management (AM) — An organizational unit that provides USPS policy and systems on mailing list service, address correction service, forwarding, and other related services. (See also *forward*.) (Formerly known as *Address Information Systems*.)

address sequencing service — A USPS service whereby address cards are sequenced in order of delivery for city routes, rural routes, highway contract routes, and post office box sections. For a qualifying mailer, address cards with either blank cards added (for missing addresses) or cards containing missing and new addresses may be added. (Compare with *mailing list service*.)

à découvert — (French) Universal Postal Union term for open transit mail (mail that crosses U.S. borders while en route from one foreign country to another) that is in unsealed containers.

adjustable platform stool — A stool with a heavy base, adjustable for height and angle, used by clerks doing manual distribution. (Also called *leaner* and *rest bar*.)

Adjustment Processing System (APS) — A software application used to make payroll adjustments for employees other than rural carriers and their replacements for data obtained from Form 2240, *Pay, Leave, or Other Hours Adjustment Request*. (Compare with *Rural Adjustment Processing System*.)

administrative support facility (ASF) — A single-function organization that typically serves the entire USPS and reports directly to Headquarters (for example, an accounting service center, material distribution center, and facilities service office).

Administrative Support Manual (ASM) — This directive contains policy and procedures for various USPS administrative and support functions. These include postal organization, the Inspection Service, corporate relations, facilities and equipment, legislative affairs, support services, purchasing and materials, and information systems. It is one of the six USPS policy manuals.

advance deposit account — A debit account into which a mailer deposits funds that are maintained by the USPS and from which postage is later deducted at the time of mailing. (Also called *trust account*.)

advanced facer-canceler (AFC) — A machine that faces, cancels, and sorts incoming letter-size mail to one of seven stackers (bins). Depending on the type of mail, the sorted letters are taken to an optical character reader, barcode sorter, or multiposition letter sorting machine for further processing. (See also *incoming mail*, *letter-size mail*, and *mail processing*.)

A

aerogramme — (French) A letter-size sheet of lightweight paper that folds into an airmail envelope for correspondence to other countries. (See also *letter-size mail*.)

Air Contract Data Collection System (ACDCS) — A network of equipment at airport mail facilities that collects information on weight, destination, and routing of air shipments.

air contract transportation tag (ACT) — A printed barcoded tag that bears barcoded information for routing mail containers to be transported by contracted air carriers.

airlift — The movement of mail by air taxi operators and air carriers. (See also *Managed Mail Program*.)

airmail — A service by which international mail receives First-Class Mail service domestically, is dispatched by the most expeditious transportation, and receives air or priority handling in the destination country.

airport mail center/facility (AMC/F) — A postal unit, located at or next to an airport, that concentrates, transfers, receives, distributes, and dispatches mail transported principally by air. (Also called *airmail field*.)

A-label service — (informal) Express Mail Post Office to Post Office Service, so called because this service uses Label 11-A. (Compare with *B-label service* and *C-level service*.)

all-purpose dating stamp — A handstamping device for imprinting (in red ink) the date, the name of city, and the post office branch or post office station on registered mail and nonmail items such as receipts. (Also called *round-dater stamp*.)

alternate delivery services — A delivery method that does not require a letter carrier. This includes caller service, firm holdout, post office box service, and general delivery.

Alternate Mailing Systems (AMS) — Customized procedures for accepting permit imprint mail. They ensure proper postage payment and mail preparation without verification by weight.

alternative addressing format — One of several formats authorized by the USPS as an alternative to the standard delivery address format. These include simplified address, occupant address, exceptional address, and congressional franked mail. (Compare with *delivery address format*.)

alternative delivery — A nonpostal method to distribute or deliver mail matter. For example, facsimile and electronic funds transfer in place of First-Class Mail; freight forwarding in place of Standard Mail (B), Priority Mail™, or Express Mail; private carriers in place of Periodicals or Standard Mail. (See also *Private Express Statutes*.)

ancillary service — Forwarding, return, or address correction service included within a mail class. Depending on the mail class, these services are performed at a charge or at no additional charge, if and when the service is actually rendered. (See also *forward*.)

ancillary service endorsement — A marking used by a mailer to request the new address of an addressee and to provide the USPS with instructions on how to handle mail that is undeliverable as addressed.

Annual Staffing and Resource Management Simulator (ASRMS) — A computer program that balances and tracks work load and workhours by accounting period. It is used to simulate staffing changes and to develop hiring plans.

application program interface (API) — Communicates POS ONE applications with USPS information systems as well as with specific service providers such as the bank card processor.

area — One of ten administrative field units that are divided into customer service support, operations support, finance, human resources, and sales. Each area is responsible for airport mail centers/facilities, bulk mail centers/facilities, customer service districts, mail transportation equipment centers, post offices, processing and distribution centers/facilities, remote encoding centers, and vehicle maintenance facilities. (Compare with *headquarters*.)

area distribution center (ADC) — A mail processing facility that receives, processes, and distributes mail destined for specific ZIP Code areas under the Managed Mail Program (MMP). This facility is one point within the national MMP distribution network and covers a specific service area.

A

area mail processing center — (obsolete) (See *processing and distribution center/facility*.)

area maintenance office (AMO) — A postal unit that services postal-owned equipment and buildings where there is no local maintenance capability.

army post office (APO) — (See *military post office*.)

aspect ratio — The dimension of a mailpiece expressed as a ratio of length (that is, the direction parallel to the address) divided by height. For example, a postcard 5-1/2 inches long by 3-1/2 inches high has an aspect ratio of 1.57. An aspect ratio between 1.3 and 2.5, inclusive, improves mail handling. (See also *nonstandard size mail* and *minimum size standard*.)

associate office infrastructure (AOI) — The server and related equipment that houses the centralized data bases and network software required for POS ONE in sites with six or more windows and all sites with three or more windows that have carrier activity. The AOI server is not a POS ONE terminal, but is in addition to the POS ONE terminals needed for IRT replacement. All POS ONE terminals at an AOI site will be connected to the server, which will eventually support delivery unit computers, CTT scanners, and other computer equipment.

associate post office (AO) — (obsolete) A post office that reported to a larger post office or that was within the service area of a sectional center facility (SCF). It usually received and dispatched all mail classes from and to the SCF. (Also called *associate office*.)

authorized pouch — A mailbag scheduled to be prepared for dispatch regularly.

automated area distribution center (AADC) — An area distribution center (ADC) that is equipped with multiline optical character readers (MLOCs), barcode sorters (BCSs), and other mail processing equipment designed for sorting automation-compatible mail.

Automated Barcode Evaluator (ABE) — A computerized program used by business mail entry units to check barcode readability and addressing accuracy using reverse barcode lookup to translate the barcode into the address point it represents.

Automated Business Mail Processing System (ABMPS) — A system in which the address on a customer's business reply mail is translated into a barcode — that is, a series of small vertical bars printed in the lower right corner of the mailpiece. The system permits identification and sorting by high-speed automated equipment.

Automated Enrollment System — A computer-based training enrollment network with links between the Technical Training Center in Norman, OK, and the material distribution centers and the postal employee development centers.

automatic container unloader — A machine that automatically unloads mail from a container onto a mechanized conveyor system. (Also called *parcel automatic unloader* or *sack automatic container unloader*.)

Automatic Density Analysis Profile Technique (ADAPT) — A computerized program that counts the amount of mail (by volume and bin destination) processed on letter sorting machines. Densities are calculated for each bin, based on the accumulated volume processed, to determine sort schemes.

automation-compatible mail — Mail that can be scanned and processed by automated mail processing equipment such as a barcode sorter.

automation discount — A postage reduction offered to mailers who prebarcode their mailpieces and meet addressing, readability, and other requirements for processing on automated equipment. The discount is relative to the single-piece rate for the mail class.

aux — The abbreviation for the term auxiliary assistance, which is provided to a letter carrier, most often, because of unusually heavy mail volume. The term also applies to the carrier who provides the assistance.

auxiliary route — A carrier route that is regularly scheduled for completion in less than 8 hours and is not up for bid by full-time carriers.

auxiliary service facility (ASF) — A mechanized facility, usually part of a general mail facility, that serves as a subordinate mail processing hub for a parent bulk mail center.

auxiliary truck schedule — A scheduled vehicle trip that augments and supplements regular trips.

B

backstamp — To mark the back of a mailpiece with a postmarking or canceling device to show that the piece was received, dispatched, or missent. (See also *postmark*.)

backtrack — To deliver mail to a point that the letter carrier has mistakenly bypassed.

bag rack — (See *sorting rack*.)

Baldrige Award — Named after the late Secretary of Commerce Malcolm Baldrige, the official title is the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. The purpose of the award is to encourage organizations to examine their current state of quality and to become more involved in the movement toward continuous quality improvement.

balloon — (informal) A huge sack or pouch of mail.

barcode (BC) — A series of vertical bars and half bars representing the ZIP Code information for the delivery address on a mailpiece. The barcode facilitates automated processing by barcode reader equipment. Each numeric digit is represented by a series of five bars (always a combination of two full bars and three half bars). A complete barcode contains two bars framing the code; the five, nine, or eleven digits containing ZIP Code and address information; and a final correction digit that allows the machine to check its reading of the ZIP Code number. (See also *POSTNET*.)

barcode clear zone — An area in the lower right part of a mailpiece that must be kept free of printing and symbols, except for the barcode itself. This requirement enables automated processing machines to read or apply the barcode.

barcoded container label — A tray or sack label that meets certain barcoding specifications in an automated tray and sack handling system. The barcode is an interleaved 2-of-5 code, not a POSTNET barcode.

barcode read area — A small area within the barcode clear zone in which the barcode must be printed. This area is defined by the position of the leftmost bar of the barcode and the bottom edge of the bar.

barcode reader (BCR) — A component of a barcode sorter that reads and interprets the barcode previously applied to a mailpiece. (Also called *wide area barcode reader* and *barcode scanner*.)

barcode sorter (BCS) — A computerized machine that sorts letter-size mail by using a barcode reader to interpret an imprinted barcode. This machine consists of a mail feed and transport unit, barcode reader, stacker module, and associated electronic equipment that can sort into a large number of separations.

bargaining unit employee — A USPS employee who is represented by a labor organization (union) that negotiates with the USPS for the wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment. These employees include city carriers, clerks, mail handlers, rural carriers, special delivery messengers, maintenance employees, and motor vehicle operators.

basket — A canvas container used for hauling and distributing all mail classes. (Also called *cart*, *gondola*, *gurney*, or *hamper*.)

batch — To gather or stack mail on edges for machine feeding. (See also *edger-feeder*.)

bedloaded bundles — Bundles of mail that are not containerized (not placed in a sack, tray, or mail transport equipment) but stacked directly onto the floor of a vehicle trailer. (Compare with *loose-loaded parcels*.)

bedloaded sacks — Sacks of mail that are not containerized but stacked directly onto the floor of a vehicle trailer.

benchmarking — A method of measuring USPS processes against those of recognized leaders. It helps establish priorities and targets leading to process improvement. It is undertaken by identifying processes to benchmark and their key characteristics; determining whom to benchmark; collecting and analyzing data from direct contact, surveys, interviews, technical journals, and advertisements; determining the “best of class” from each benchmark item identified; and evaluating the postal process in terms of the benchmarks set and the improvement goals.

best practice — A method of accomplishing a postal business function or process that is considered to be superior to all other known methods.

bin — A separation (such as a pigeonhole) on the sweepside of a letter sorting machine or similar mechanized or automated mail distribution equipment. (Formerly called *pocket*.)

B

B-label service — (informal) Express Mail Post Office to Addressee Service, so called because it uses Label 11-B. (Compare with *A-label service* and *C-label service*.)

black bag — A reusable overnight pouch for transmitting postal documents, reports, and workpapers.

block face — For the assignment of ZIP+4 codes, one side of a street, from one intersection to the next. (See also *segment*.)

Board of Governors — The group that directs the exercise of the powers of the USPS. Nine Governors are appointed by the President of the United States, with the advice and consent of the Senate. The remaining members are the postmaster general (appointed by the Governors) and the deputy postmaster general (appointed by the Governors and the postmaster general). The Board directs and controls the expenditures and reviews the practices and policies of the USPS.

Bound Printed Matter (BPM) — A subclass of Standard Mail (B) that weighs at least 1 pound but not more than 10 pounds and that consists of permanently bound sheets of which at least 90 percent are printed with advertising, directory, editorial matter, or a combination of these. (Compare with *printed matter*.)

brace — An entry (connecting written bracket) in a sort scheme that shows one or more post offices having the same mail supply.

branch — (See *post office branch*.)

bread tray — (informal) (See *tray cart*.)

bricklay — To stack parcels or trays one over the other with overlap, like bricks, to achieve a stable load in a trailer or van.

buck slip — An informal, written communication used to transmit papers and information. (Also called *routing slip*.)

budget authorization — A two-character code used in reporting systems to group performance clusters and Headquarters organizational units in groups.

bulk business mail (BBM) — Periodicals and Standard Mail (formerly third- and fourth-class mail) submitted in bulk to business mail entry units or other designated facilities. The term includes samples, ordinary papers, and circulars. (See also *direct mail*.)

bulkie — (informal) A regular-size envelope that contains an object making the mailpiece nonmachinable (such as a pen, film roll, or thermometer). The envelope must be culled to protect both mailpiece and machine. (See also *slug*.) (Also called *heavy*.)

bulk mail — Mail that is rated for postage partly by weight and partly by the number of pieces in the mailing. The term is generally used to refer to Standard Mail (A).

bulk mail center (BMC) — A highly mechanized mail processing plant that is part of the National Bulk Mail System. This facility distributes Standard Mail (A) and Periodicals in bulk form and Standard Mail (B) in both piece and bulk form. (See also *auxiliary service facility*.)

bulk mail center container — A tall, four-sided container made of steel or aluminum with wheels. This type of mail equipment is used to transport parcels and bulk mail between postal facilities. It is used in automated processing systems at bulk mail centers.

Bulk Mail System — (See *National Bulk Mail System*.)

bulk rate — The postage rate for mailpieces that are part of a large-volume mailing and that meet minimum volume and preparation requirements. The term is most often applied to Standard Mail (A) mailings, which usually consist of a per piece rate plus a per pound rate.

Bulletin de Vérification — (See *Verification Note/Bulletin of Verification*.)

bum — (informal) A bundle of empty sacks or pouches.

bump — (informal) Auxiliary assistance provided to a letter carrier because of unusually heavy mail volume. The term can also be used as a synonym for *aux*, *hit*, or *relay*.

bundle — Two or more packages secured together as a single unit. They may be placed on a pallet or prepared as a bedloaded bundle (outside the mail sack) only when such preparation is approved by the USPS. Also, for palletization, a group of packages. To band or tie together a group of packages to be handled as a single unit.

B

business case — A structured proposal for USPS business process improvement that functions as a decision package for USPS leadership. A business case includes an analysis of business process needs or problems, proposed solution, assumptions and constraints, alternatives, life cycle costs, benefits/cost analysis, and investment risk analysis. In some government agencies, a business case is called a functional economic analysis (FEA).

business mail entry unit (BMEU) — The area of a postal facility where a mailer presents for acceptance bulk mail or presorted mail. It includes dedicated platform space, office space, and a staging area on the workroom floor. (See also *detached mail unit*.) (Formerly called *bulk mail acceptance unit*, *platform acceptance unit*, or *weigher's station*.)

business process focus — A view of the USPS as an enterprise that exists to create value for our customers and stakeholders via use of a cross-functional process orientation to our work.

business process improvement (BPI) — The betterment of the Postal Service's business practices through the analysis of activities to reduce or eliminate non-value added activities or costs, while at the same time maintaining or improving quality, productivity, timeliness, or other strategic or business purposes as evidenced by measures of performance. Also called functional process improvement.

business process reengineering (BPR) — is a radical improvement approach that critically examines, rethinks, and redesigns mission product and service processes within the Postal Service's political environment. It achieves dramatic mission performance gains from multiple customer and stakeholder perspectives. It is a key part of a process management approach for optimal performance that continually evaluates, adjusts, or removes processes.

business reply mail (BRM) — Specially printed postcards, envelopes, cartons, and labels that may be mailed without postage prepayment. Postage and fees are collected when the mail is delivered back to the original sender. This domestic service enables authorized mailers to receive First-Class Mail, without prepaid postage, back from customers by paying the postage and fee on receipt of the mailpieces. (Compare with *courtesy reply mail*, *International Business Reply Service*, and *meter reply mail*.)

Business Reply Mail Accounting System (BRMAS) — An automated means of processing and rating prebarcoded business reply mail (BRM). Through this system, a BRM customer may be eligible for a lower per piece fee than would otherwise apply to BRM.

business route — A city delivery route on which at least 70 percent of the deliveries are to businesses. (Compare with *residential route*.)

bypass mail — Metered mail, permit imprint mail, and official mail arriving at a post office that does not require preparation before outgoing distribution. Also, mail improperly entered into the mailstream without verification of postage or preparation. (See also *backtrack* and *Presort/presorted mail*.)

bypass mailings — Mailings that enter the mailstream without proper acceptance through a business mail entry unit or a detached mail unit. Postage is not collected.



cachet — In philately, a printed decoration on mail matter (such as a design or inscription), often referring to the new postage stamp on a first day cover. The design can be hand-created, printed, rubber-stamped, or pasted, usually on the front left side of the envelope.

caddy cart — (See *satchel cart*.)

cage — A secure, enclosed area in a post office, separated from the rest of the workroom, where registered mail and other accountable mail is kept.

caller box — (See *caller service*.)

caller service — An alternate delivery service provided for a fee at all post offices to customers with large volumes of mail, to customers needing multiple separations, or to customers who need a post office box number address when no post office boxes are available. (Compare with *firm holdout*, *general delivery*, and *post office box service*.)

cancel — To render a postage stamp (except a precanceled stamp) unusable, usually at the point of original entry into the mailstream. This is done by using a facer-canceler or a handstamp (for bulkie, fragile, or odd-shaped mail). (See also *mail processing* and *revenue assurance*.)

canceling machine — A mail processing machine that cancels a postage stamp and places a postmark on a letter. (See also *facer-canceler*.)

cancellation — A postmark that contains the post office name, state, ZIP Code, and month, day, and year that the mail matter was canceled. (See also *hand-stamped cancellation*.)

carrier — An individual contractor or private company (airline, trucking company, railroad, etc.) that transports the mail from one postal facility to another. (See also *contact point*; compare with *letter carrier*.)

Carrier Alert — A community service program in which a letter carrier attempts to detect possible illness or accident suffered by the customer (for example, elderly persons or persons with disabilities). When alerted by an accumulation of mail, the carrier reports the matter to local social service agencies for appropriate follow-up. This service is provided jointly with private agencies (that is, the National Association of Letter Carriers and the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association).

carrier associate — (See *rural carrier associate*.)

carrier route (CR) — Usually the addresses served by a postal employee (generally a city carrier or rural carrier) to deliver mail to customers. This can include city routes, rural routes, and highway contract routes.

Carrier Route Information System (CRIS) — The official city delivery scheme that lists all city and noncity delivery post offices, which is available to mailers in a standardized format. It contains schemes for city routes, rural routes, highway contract routes, post office box sections, and general delivery units. The data are formatted by ZIP Code, street name, and street number range. Delivery statistics (possible deliveries) for each carrier route are also included in the file. (See also *Coding Accuracy Support System*.)

carrier route presort mail — Mail that the mailer arranges by carrier route to qualify for discount postage rates. The mail requires no primary or secondary distribution. The term is a general descriptor of the available rates for this type of preparation, including Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail, automation carrier route First-Class Mail, carrier route Periodicals, and carrier route Bound Printed Matter. Except for automation rates, this mail usually does not bear a barcode. (See also *sequence*.) (Also called *Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail* and *route-sequenced mail*.)

carrier route sack — A sack labeled to a specific carrier route when there are 125 mailpieces or 15 pounds (or more) destined to the same route. Certain low-density routes may permit exceptions to the volume/weight requirement.

carrier route scheme — Identification of the street names and numbers that are assigned to a specific carrier route for delivery of mail. (See also *scheme*.)

carrier sequence barcode sorter (CSBCS) — An automated machine that sorts mail for an individual carrier route, allowing the mail to go directly from the machine to the carrier for delivery to postal customers. The CSBCS is a smaller barcode sorter designed for delivery units with 10 or more routes.

carry-by — Surface mail carried beyond the point of scheduled dispatch.

carry-out — Surface mail for the first delivery stops of a foot carrier's route. The carrier takes it out of the office in a satchel, and the rest of the mail is deposited by a motorized carrier into relay boxes along the route.



case — A piece of equipment that contains separations into which clerks or letter carriers sort letters, flats, or irregular parcels. To sort mail into a case. (See also *irregular parcels and pieces*.)

Case Analysis System (CAS) — A computer system that analyzes mail volume and density in manual distribution cases to determine the best arrangement of separations.

case label — A long strip of heavy paper, cardboard, or other material that shows names or numbers and individual addresses assigned to a carrier route. It is placed below the separations on the carrier case. Also, a tag of heavy paper or cardboard on a clerk distribution case that shows post office, state, or ZIP Code. It is placed above the case separation or box as a distribution guide. (Also called *header*.)

catalog — Bound Printed Matter consisting entirely of advertising.

cc:Mail — The Lotus electronic mail application used by USPS.

Center for Leadership Development — The William F. Bolger Center for Leadership Development provides managerial, supervisory, technical, and functional training. The academy is located in Potomac, MD.

centralized mail delivery — Delivery and collection services to a number of office buildings or residents from a centrally located delivery point or place.

Centralized Postage Payment System (CPP) — A method that allows a publisher of authorized Periodicals publications entered at three or more post offices to pay postage at a single USPS facility rather than through separate accounts maintained at each entry post office.

central point delivery — A residential service that provides delivery to several addresses at one delivery point (for example, a neighborhood delivery and collection box unit). (Compare with *sidewalk delivery* and *single point delivery*.)

Central Repair Facility (CRF) — A national center reporting to Headquarters that manages maintenance and repair of self-service equipment.

certificate of mailing — A supplemental mail service that provides a receipt prepared by the mailer as proof of mailing.

certified mail — A special service that provides the sender with a receipt at the time of mailing; a record of delivery is kept at the post office of address. This type of mail must be sent at the regular First-Class Mail or Priority Mail rate. If sent as First-Class Mail, it is dispatched and handled in transit as ordinary mail. There are additional fees for return receipt. (Compare with *registered mail*.)

change management facility (CMF) — USPS facility from which the distribution of changes to POS ONE field units is controlled.

change-of-address (COA) — A customer move from one mailing address to another.

change-of-address order — A customer's notification to the post office of a permanent or temporary change of address (COA) by using Form 3575, *Change of Address Order*, or other written or personal notice.

channel sorter — (See *optical character reader/channel sorter*.)

check errors — To note, record, and report errors in mail distribution and dispatch made by other clerks.

Christmas casual — A temporary USPS employee appointed during the Christmas holiday period.

chunk — (informal) A small parcel.

circ — An abbreviated form of the word circular.

circular — Standard Mail (A) that consists of printed or reproduced materials (such as advertising) sent to many customers. (See also *direct mail*.)

circular sorting rack — A stationary circular rack used in offices other than bulk mail centers. (See also *rotary sorting rack* and *sorting rack*.)

Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee — A group of individuals (non-USPS employees) appointed by the USPS to review suggestions for postage stamp subjects and to recommend those subjects to be adopted for postage stamps and postal stationery. The Committee, which meets several times a year, includes artists, historians, educators, and philatelists with backgrounds related to the subjects and stamp design.



city carrier — A letter carrier who provides city delivery service. This includes delivery and collection of all mail classes to residences and businesses within an area authorized for city delivery service.

city delivery establishment — The initiation of city delivery service in an area currently not receiving it.

city delivery extension — The initiation of city delivery service in an area outside current city delivery boundaries but in which city delivery service has already been established.

city delivery service — Delivery by city carriers of mail addressed to residences and businesses within an area that has a population of at least 2,500 residents or more than 750 possible deliveries. The area must have paved or improved streets; street signs and house numbers displayed; and 50 percent of the building lots developed with residences and other structures. (See also *business route* and *residential route*.) (Compare with *rural delivery service*.)

city mail — Mail prepared (made up) for a particular city for distribution to firms, carrier routes, post office stations, or post office branches.

city route — A delivery route served by a city carrier.

City Time and Attendance Processing System (CTAPS) — A payroll software application for city timecard data via Forms 1230-A, 1230-B, and 1230-C, *Timecard*, and Form 1377, *Request for Payment of Postmaster Replacement and/or Postmaster CAG L Overtime*.

C-label service — (informal) Express Mail Same Day Airport Service, so called because it uses Label 11-C. (Compare with *A-label service* and *B-label service*.)

class — (See *mail class*.)

classification — The grouping of mailable matter into mail classes and subclasses by rate categories, according to content, weight, size, and preparation standards.

classified unit — Post office stations and post office branches operated by USPS employees in quarters owned or leased by the USPS. (Compare with *contract postal unit* and *finance unit*.)

Classroom rate — A special rate of Periodicals that is available to an authorized mailer of educational, scientific, or religious publications for scholastic or religious instruction.

clearance time — The latest time that a type of mail (either class or destination) can pass through an operation to make the proper dispatch or delivery.

closed transit dispatches — Sealed bags of international mail that travel through the USPS from one country to another country. These bags are not opened for redistribution.

cluster box unit — A centralized unit of individually locked compartments for the delivery of mailpieces. (See also *neighborhood delivery and collection box unit*.)

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) — A codification of the rules published in the Federal Register by executive departments and agencies of the federal government. USPS regulations found in the *Domestic Mail Manual*, *International Mail Manual*, and *Procurement Manual* are incorporated by reference in title 39 of the code. (See also *Domestic Mail Classification Schedule*.)

Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS) — A service offered to mailers, service bureaus, and software vendors that improves that accuracy of delivery point barcodes, ZIP+4 codes, 5-digit ZIP Codes, and carrier route information on mailpieces. CASS provides a common platform to measure the quality of address matching software and useful diagnostics to correct software problems. (See also *Carrier Route Information System*.)

coil — A roll of postage stamps (usually in quantities of 100, 500, 3,000, or 10,000).

colis postaux (CP) — (French) International parcel post.

collect — To pick up mail from collection boxes or customers.

collection — The pickup of mail from street collection boxes, businesses, or customers on the street. This operation is usually scheduled to meet mail processing and dispatch requirements.



collection box — A blue-painted street box with the USPS logo used by the public to deposit mail. Each box is equipped with a security lock. It has a uniform appearance and a nationwide identification system that distinguishes the type of service provided at each box.

collection box insert — A plastic or fiberboard four-sided tub placed in an empty collection box to receive deposited mail.

collection mail — Mail deposited into a collection box or lobby drop, as well as mail collected by letter carriers on their delivery rounds.

collection route — In city delivery service, a motorized carrier route for picking up mail deposited into collection boxes or lobby drops and picked up from large companies.

collect on delivery (COD) — Any mailer may use COD service to mail an article for which the mailer has not been paid and have its price and the cost of the postage collected from the recipient. If the recipient remits the amount due by check payable to the mailer, the USPS forwards the check to the mailer. If the recipient pays in cash, the USPS sends a postal money order to the mailer. The amount collected from the recipient may not exceed \$600. COD service provides the mailer with a mailing receipt, and a delivery record is kept at the post office of address.

collector — A letter carrier who gathers mail from street collection boxes and building boxes and then takes it to the post office for processing.

combination route — A motorized route that combines the functions of collection, relay, Parcel Post, or inter- or intracity routes.

combined mailing — A mailing in which individually addressed copies of two or more Periodicals publications or editions are merged into a single mailstream, during production or after finished copies are produced, and all copies are sorted together to achieve the finest presort level possible. Also, the combination of Bound Printed Matter and Special Standard Mail into one parcel. (Also called *comailing*.)

commemorative stamp — A postage stamp that depicts the cultural and historical heritage of the United States (for example, important people, events, places, or special subjects of national appeal or significance). This type of stamp is usually issued at the prime (or common current) rate, is printed in limited quantities, is typically large and colorful, and is sold for a limited time. (Compare with *definitive stamp* and *special-issue stamp*.)

commercial mailing agent (CMA) — A private third party that engages in a principal-agent relationship to mail bulk business mail.

commercial mail receiving agency (CMRA) — A private business that acts as the mail-receiving agent for specific clients. The business must be registered with the post office responsible for delivery to the CMRA.

commingle — To integrate dissimilar material (for example, subscriber and nonsubscriber copies, Standard Mail (A) and Standard Mail (B) parcels) into the same mailing; this may require USPS authorization.

committed space — The specific amount of space (in cubic feet) set aside for transporting mail aboard an aircraft or flight.

community post office (CPO) — A contract postal unit that provides service in small communities where independent post offices have been discontinued. A CPO bears its community's name and ZIP Code as part of a recognized address.

complex post office — A post office that has its mail totally processed at a processing and distribution center/facility.

Comprehensive-Interactive Information Strategy (CIIS) — The enterprise-wide architecture that supports the end-to-end business processes, optimized IT investment, eliminates stovepipe application development, and shapes the future of IT initiatives at USPS.

computer-assisted keyboard training (CAKT) — A method of using computer simulation to teach machine mail sorting.

computer-assisted scheme training (CAST) — A means of providing scheme training to and testing of manual distribution clerks through computer graphic representation of sortation items.

Computerized Forwarding System II (CFS II) — A centralized or computerized address label-generating operation that forwards the mail to customers who have moved and filed Form 3575, *Change of Address Order*. (See also *markup* and *undeliverable as addressed*.)

Computerized On-Site Data Entry System (CODES) — Automation of major USPS statistical programs that are designed to attribute costs to each mail class. Data and voice communications are used for data collection and associated field administrative functions.



Computerized Meter Resetting System (CMRS) — An electronic system that permits the user of an approved postage meter to reset the meter at the user's place of business.

computer operations service center (COSC) — A data processing facility that provides computer support for postal activities. COSCs are located in San Mateo, CA, and Minneapolis, MN.

concentration center — A postal facility that receives international mail from designated low-volume origins and dispatches it to the appropriate international exchange office.

CON-CON — The concentration (amassing at specific points) and convoy (transport) of registered mail under controlled conditions. CON-CON is a USPS trademark.

console — A complete work station on the multiposition letter sorting machine at which the operator keys ZIP Code or assigned numbers found on addresses of letter-size mail. This station includes a feed table, a vacuum pickoff arm, an inserter trough, and a keyboard.

consolidation point — (See *gateway*.)

consumer advocate — A USPS officer appointed by, and serving under the direction of, the postmaster general. This officer represents the interests of the individual mail user, recommends policy changes to improve service, responds to consumer concerns, and informs consumers about postal products and services.

Consumer Service Card — A multipart form (Form 4314) that is used by customers and USPS employees to record service complaints or compliments. A postmaster or designee replies directly to complaints and submits them to the St. Louis Accounting Service Center for tabulation and follow-up. The form is available both in English and Spanish. (See also *accounting service center*.)

contact point — A specific area or point designated for the exchange of mail between the USPS and a transportation company or agency. (See also *carrier*.)

container — Any equipment used to hold more than one mailpiece. The term includes a sack, pouch, hamper, nutting truck, basket, letter tray or flat tray and a variety of boxes and carts. Mail transport equipment used to move mail in plant or between authorized postal facilities. These include the Amtrak container, bulk mail center over-the-road (BMC-OTR) container, BMC in-house container, CON-CON container, multipurpose containers (eastern region mail container and general purpose mail container), and wire container.

container cart — A small four-wheeled cart used by city carriers to deliver mail on their routes.

containerized office — A postal facility designated to send and receive bulk mail in bulk mail center containers, general purpose mail containers, flat trays, and letter trays.

container pouch — A pouch that contains several small or lightly loaded pouches — all dispatched to the same downstream point for delivery to individual destinations. It reduces handling and prevents loss between origin and delivery points.

Container Transport System — An electromechanical system for the movement of full or empty mail containers within a bulk mail center. It uses programmed commands or guides to save manual labor. (Also called *towveyor*.)

contracting officer representative (COR) — A person authorized to monitor contracts on behalf of the USPS. (See also *quality assurance*.)

contract postal unit — A postal unit that is a subordinate unit within the service area of a main post office. It is usually located in a store or place of business and is operated by a contractor who accepts mail from the public, sells postage and supplies, and provides selected special services (for example, postal money order or registered mail). (Compare with *classified unit*.) (Also called *contract branch*, *contract station*, and *community post office*.)

conventional adhesive — (See *water-activated adhesive*.)

conversion — A change in an employee's status or tenure, usually from a casual, temporary, or excepted status to another type of employment.



conversion rate — The factor used for specific types and classifications of mail when converting weight, containers, or feet of mail to number of pieces.

conveyor — The mechanical or gravity-operated belt or rollers for transferring mail between car or vehicle and platform, or from one location to another in a post office. (See also *gravity roller conveyor*, *loading conveyor*, and *surge conveyor*.) (Also called *sorting conveyor*.)

convoy — To escort and guard registered mail or other accountable items.

cooperative mailing — A mailing made by an authorized Nonprofit Standard Mail organization that collaborates with one or more organizations not authorized to share the cost, risk, or benefit of the mailing. Such mailing is improper if one of the organizations is not authorized to mail at the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates at the office of mailing.

copalletize — To combine and present together on pallets mail from two or more different or separately produced mailstreams; this may require USPS authorization. (See also *palletization*.)

cord fastener — A label holder with attachment that fastens the cord that closes the mouth of a sack.

Corporate Call Management Program — A program to provide customers telephone access to information about USPS services via 800 telephone number, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

corporate champion — Reengineering efforts require a postal corporate champion to sponsor the effort, promote it among his or her high-level corporate peers, and support the charter for the effort at the corporate level.

Corporate Data Base (CDB) — A collection of information from major financial and operating systems, used for the allocation, management, and control of postal resources. It contains data on revenues and expenses, pricing and costing, volume and productivity, service performance, and workhours and benefits.

cost ascertainment grouping (CAG) — A method that classifies post offices according to volume of revenue generated. Each year, the *Postal Bulletin* publishes the number of revenue units for each classification. CAG A–G — offices with about 950 or more revenue units. CAG H–J — offices with about 190, but fewer than 950. CAG K — offices with about 36, but fewer than 190. CAG L — offices with about fewer than 36. Formerly, post offices were classified as first-, second-, third-, and fourth-class offices.

courtesy box — (See *snorkel collection box*.)

courtesy reply mail (CRM) — A preaddressed return envelope or postcard that business mailers provide to a customer for returning a remittance, order, or response. The customer pays the postage. In many cases, the envelope is also prebarcoded. (Compare with *business reply mail* and *meter reply mail*.)

cover — In philately, an envelope on which all the postal markings or cancellations have been applied. (Compare with *mail cover*.)

craft employee — (See *bargaining unit employee*.)

critical entry time — The latest time a particular class of transported mail can arrive at the destination post office to meet the service standard for mail processing, dispatch, and final delivery.

cross boundary — Mail shipments from one bulk mail center (BMC) or auxiliary service facility (ASF) area to a facility in another BMC or ASF area. The shipment bypasses the parent BMC of the originating or destinating facility.

cull — To remove nonletter mail (such as small parcels, rolls, and odd-shaped material) from letter mail (and nonmachinable mailpieces from automation rate pieces) by hand or machine. During culling, specials (such as special delivery and accountable mail) and flats are segregated from other letter mailpieces. (See also *bulkie* and *mail processing*.)

culling and facing conveyor — A mechanized letter-facing conveyor with a collection sack shakeout hopper and a conveyor belt top for culling, combined with a two-channel edger-feeder to dual stackers.

curbside delivery — A method of city delivery service where the letter carrier (walking or in a vehicle) delivers to customer mailboxes located at the curb. (Compare with *sidewalk delivery*.) (Also called *curbline delivery*.)



curtailed — The mail that the letter carrier cannot case before scheduled delivery-route leave time and is authorized to leave for casing the next day. Also, the nondelivery of mail to a customer in cases where the premises are hazardous (for example, when a customer does not restrain a dog).

CustomerPerfect! — Establishes processes to monitor the marketplace, create business plans, conduct work monitor results, initiate improvements, and acknowledge employee contributions. (See also *Voice of the Business*, *Voice of the Customer*, and *Voice of the Employee*.)

Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) — A survey of randomly selected residential postal customers that, along with unsolicited consumer complaints, offers feedback on consumer services.

customs mail — Mail originating in other countries and most U.S. possessions and territories that is subject to examination and is sometimes charged a customs duty.

cutoff time — A time set by the unit manager at which a letter carrier makes a final withdrawal of mail from the distribution case before preparing to leave for the assigned route. Also, the latest time that mail can be accepted for processing to meet service standards for the specific mail class.

daylight container — Mail transported at a specified transportation rate in containers (owned by carriers) on airline flights scheduled to depart between 6:01 a.m. and 8:59 p.m.

deadhead — A vehicle that travels without mail. To retrace part of a route without delivering mail, such as along a street with houses on one side only.

dead letter office/dead parcel branch — (See *mail recovery center*.)

dead mail — Matter deposited in the mail that is or becomes undeliverable as addressed and cannot be returned to the sender from the last office of address. The matter may be nonmailable, the sender may be unknown, or the mail class does not provide for return service. (See also *mail recovery center*.)

defective — (informal) A damaged pouch, sack, lock, or key.

definitive stamp — A regular postage stamp issued in unlimited quantities or often as part of a thematic series. These stamps vary in denomination and remain on sale for an indefinite period. (Compare with *commemorative stamp* and *special-issue stamp*.) (Also called *regular-issue stamp*.)

deliver — To take mail from the post office to the customer or to provide customer pickup — whether post office box, window, or dock.

delivery — The act of taking mail from the post office to the customer. The mail itself taken to the customer's business or residential delivery address or picked up at a post office — whether post office box, window, or dock.

delivery address — The location (destination) to which the USPS is to deliver a mailpiece. Except for mail prepared with a detached address label, the piece must show the address of the addressee (intended recipient) on the side bearing the postage. It is usually placed in the lower right. (Compare with *return address*.)

D

delivery address format — Address elements required by the USPS on all mailpieces — that is, the intended recipient's name; either general delivery, a house or building number and street name (plus apartment/suite number, if applicable), or a post office box number or rural route or highway contract route designation with a box number; and city, state or state abbreviation, and ZIP Code or ZIP+4. Placement of this information on the mailpiece determines the dimension considered the length of letter-size mail. (Compare with *alternative addressing format*.)

delivery point barcode (DPBC) — A POSTNET barcode that contains a ZIP+4 barcode plus two additional digits (10 additional bars) that designate a specific delivery point. It consists of 62 bars with beginning and ending frame bars and 5 bars each for the 9 digits of the ZIP+4, the last 2 digits of the primary street address (or post office box, etc.), and a correction digit. This type of barcode allows automated sortation of mail at the carrier route level in walk sequence. (See also *POSTal Numeric Encoding Technique*.)

delivery point code — In mail processing, the finest depth of code to which a mailpiece can be sorted by its address. It is usually the 11-digit numeric code formed from the ZIP+4 and represented by the delivery point barcode (DPBC).

delivery sequenced mail — Mail that the mailer arranges in delivery order for a particular carrier route. This mail requires no primary distribution or secondary distribution. (See also *sequence*.)

delivery unit — A post office, post office station, or post office branch that has mail delivery functions.

Density Analysis System (DAS) — A computerized system that collects and analyzes information on mail volume by ZIP Code. It is used to increase the efficiency and productivity of a facility's automated mail sorting and manual distribution equipment.

Department of State mail — Certain types of domestic mail transmitted to U.S. citizens who are employees of the federal government stationed abroad.

deploy — Second step in *Customer Perfect!* planning process (establish, deploy, implement, review). Once overall corporate goals are established, Headquarters, area, and performance cluster teams negotiate on specific targets and budgets to ensure that each level is making an optimum contribution toward achieving the corporate goals.

depreddation — The term used by the Inspection Service for robbery or pilfering of funds from the mail.

deputy postmaster general (DPMG) — A member of the Board of Governors, jointly appointed by the postmaster general and the Board of Governors.

designated post office (DPO) — In the Centralized Postage Payment System, the post office at which a publisher maintains the central account from which postage is withdrawn for mailings of Periodicals publications. (Compare with *entry post office*.)

designation code — A two-digit number that indicates the type of position and workforce designation (such as full-time or part-time) to which a USPS employee is assigned; it enables the proper salary account to be charged. (See also *labor distribution code*.)

destinating mail — Incoming mail arriving for its point of final delivery. (Compare with *originating mail*.)

destination bulk mail center rate — A discount/rate available for Parcel Post and bulk Standard Mail (A) transported by the mailer (at the mailer's own expense) to the bulk mail center serving that delivery area.

destination delivery unit rate — A discount/rate available for Periodicals and Standard Mail (A) carrier route mail that are properly prepared and entered by the mailer at the delivery unit that serves the delivery address on the mail.

destination sectional center facility rate — A discount/rate available for Periodicals and Standard Mail (A) that are properly prepared and entered by the mailer at the sectional center facility that serves the delivery address on the mail (for Standard Mail (A)) or its service area (for Periodicals).

D

detached address label (DAL) — Paper or cardboard stock used to display address information when preparing a mailing of unaddressed Periodicals flats, Standard Mail (A) flats or merchandise samples, or unaddressed Bound Printed Matter.

detached label delivery — A delivery method that uses a detached address label with postage that is separate from, but delivered with, an unaddressed merchandise sample, magazine, or newspaper.

detached mail unit (DMU) — An area at a mailer's plant used by the USPS to accept, verify, and dispatch larger volumes of mail. (See also *business mail entry unit*.)

diagram — An official plan either for labeling letter cases and sorting racks or for loading mail onto a vehicle, airplane, or rail container.

direct — A package, pouch, sack, or other mail container with each piece addressed to the same address, company, postal unit, or post office. A direct, referred to on the secondary case or optical character reader, indicates a high-volume recipient of mail who is assigned, sometimes temporarily or seasonally, a unique separation in the case. (See also *firm direct*.)

directive — A USPS policy statement; regulation; set of guidelines, procedures, or standards; reference work, or similar material issued by the appropriate functional department. It serves to direct or guide Headquarters, field organizations, or the public. USPS directives include the six policy manuals, the *Postal Bulletin*, and any numbered handbook or publication, as well as kits, labels, management instructions, notices, posters, signs, and tags.

direct mail — An industry term for advertising mail sent to targeted markets. It can be any mail class, but it is usually Standard Mail (A).

direct runoff — In mechanized mail sortation, a conveyor that transports sacks and parcels from discharge chutes on the sorting machine directly to van doors. Additional conveyors may be added at the discharge point to help load the van.

DIS — The code for “distribution at” used to label mail for two or more post offices that receive mail through another post office or general mail facility that sorts incoming mail for a defined service area.

dismount delivery — The method of delivery in which a letter carrier leaves a vehicle for one or several deliveries and then returns to move the vehicle to the next delivery point.

dispatch — Mail readied and loaded for transportation. To ready the mail for loading.

dispatch of value — The last dispatch of the day that is loaded on transportation in time to meet the service standard for the mail class or destination.

dispenser — (See *stamp vending machine*.)

distribute — To sort mail in order to group pieces according to a plan or scheme.

Distributed Data Entry and Distributed Reporting (DDE/DR) — A group of software applications used to process payroll and payroll-related transactions by remote video display terminals, which are linked to the mainframe at the Minneapolis Accounting Service Center (ASC). The sites are also equipped with printers for transmitting system-generated application reports, replies to local inquiries, and reports normally mailed from the ASC.

distributing unit — The area in a post office, post office station, post office branch, and airport mail center/facility where distribution clerks sort mail.

distribution — The sorting of mail into pigeonhole cases, trays, sacks, machine bins, or pouches in order to group pieces with a common destination for transportation to the post office of address. It may be done by manual, mechanized, or automated means. The term is also applied to the distributed mail itself.

distribution networks office (DNO) — A postal unit that prepares all authorized National Air and Surface System (NASS) dispatch and routing instructions and coordinates USPS transportation operations within a geographic area. (See also *route*.)

district — An administrative field unit that oversees most operational and support functions for post offices in a defined geographic area.

divider — A vertical or horizontal separator for letter carrier or clerk distribution cases.

D

dock transfer — The movement of mail on a dock from one van to another without further sorting or changing the packing form. A split of mail can be done.

domestic mail — Mail transmitted within, among, and between the United States; its territories and possessions; army post offices (APOs) and fleet post offices (FPOs) ; and mail for delivery to the United Nations, NY. Mail exchanged between the United States and the Freely Associated States is also treated as domestic mail. It is classified by size, weight, content, service, and other factors.

Domestic Mail Classification Schedule (DMCS) — The basic framework for classifying domestic mail categories (mail classes) and postal services and for setting postal rates and fees. It represents the recommendations of the Postal Rate Commission as adopted by the USPS Board of Governors, under the classification and rate-setting mechanism prescribed by the Postal Reorganization Act (39 U.S.C.). (See also *Code of Federal Regulations* and *rate setting*.)

Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) — A directive that contains the basic USPS standards for domestic mail services; a description of and requirements for each mail class special service and ancillary service and conditions governing their uses; and standards for rate eligibility and mail preparation. It is one of six USPS policy manuals.

doubles — In mechanized and automation sorting, two or more mailpieces moving as one and thus causing a distribution error.

dress the rack — To hang empty sacks or pouches on a sorting rack. (Also called *hang the rack*.)

drive-out agreement — An arrangement between a letter carrier and the USPS in which the carrier provides and is reimbursed for the use of his or her personal vehicle for mail delivery. (See also *vehicle hire contract*.)

driver — An activity or condition that has a direct influence on the operational performance or cost structure of other activities.

drop — A lobby slot or opening where customers deposit mail.

drop box — The olive green noncollection receptacle where city carriers leave mail on the line of travel for later pickup and delivery by another carrier. (Also called *relay box*.)



drop day — (informal) A scheduled day off for an employee.

drop letter — A letter mailed for local delivery at a post office that has neither city delivery nor collection and delivery by a rural carrier or highway contract route carrier. Letters are picked up by the addressees.

drop shipment — A mailing transported by the mailer or a private (nonpostal) carrier, from the point of production to a postal facility located closer to the destination. Express Mail and Priority Mail drop shipment, however, are transported by the USPS instead of a private carrier.

dual address — A delivery address with both a street address and post office box number. Delivery is made to the address on the line immediately above the city, state, and ZIP+4 line.

duck stamp — (informal) (See *migratory-bird hunting and conservation stamp*.)

dumping table — A worktable where sacks or pouches are emptied.

dump up — (informal) To empty sacks and pouches on a worktable or other sorting surface.

duty — A charge collected by the U.S. Customs Service on imported goods entering the United States by mail.

E

eastern region mail container (ERMC) — A wheeled multipurpose mail container for smaller, bulk-loaded items. Unlike the general purpose mail container, it is equipped with an interior plastic liner, a full-height web door, and a coupler pin. (Compare with *general purpose mail container*.)

Easy Stamp Service — (obsolete) Formerly referred to as a method for consumer purchase of postage stamps other than direct sales at a post office window unit. This includes Stamps by Mail, Stamps by Phone, Stamps on Consignment, Stamps by Prodigy, and Stamps by Automated Teller Machine.

edge — To position large quantities of letter-size mail on their edge for feeding into automated equipment. (See also *edger-feeder* and *jog*.)

edger-feeder — A machine that receives culled mail and extracts thick mail and flats, aligns edges, and automatically feeds letter mailpieces into a facer-canceler. (See also *batch* and *edge*.)

edger-stacker — A machine that receives culled letter mail for edging and stacking, usually for feeding into a facer-canceler. Also a component of a barcode sorter.

elbow and eyeball — (informal) To open and examine the interior of a presumably empty sack to ensure that it does not contain mail trapped inside.

Electronic Marketing Reporting System (EMRS) — A national computer system that compiles data for sales and service reports on USPS services such as Express Mail, Priority Mail, International Priority Airmail, and International Air Lift (ISAL).

electronic sort processor (ESP) — A modification to the multiposition letter sorting machine/ZIP mail translator that makes the machine quieter and more accurate.

eligibility — Qualification standards such as content, mail processing category, and preparation applied to mail for a specific rate or discount such as Nonprofit Standard Mail 3-digit automation rate.

Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) — A directive that contains USPS personnel policies and regulations affecting organization management, job evaluation, employment and placement, pay administration, employee benefits, employee relations, training and development, safety and health, and labor relations. It is one of six USPS policy manuals.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) — A voluntary program that assists USPS employees to recover from substance abuse and to cope with mental, emotional, family, financial, and legal problems. Evaluation, counseling, or referral is provided by professional counselors contracted by the Public Health Service. (Formerly called *Program for Alcoholic Recovery*.)

Employee Involvement/Quality of Work Life (EI/QWL) — A USPS participatory management style that involves employees at all levels in decisions affecting their work and work environment.

empty equipment — All empty sacks, pouches, and other mail transport equipment used to hold mail.

encoded mail — Mail processed on a multiline optical character reader (MLOCR) that has a barcode representation of its ZIP+4 printed on the lower right corner of the mailpiece. USPS optical character reader or remote encoding equipment can barcode the piece, or the customer can preprint the barcode on the piece.

encumbered route — A rural route with a regular rural carrier assigned. The term is used in rural route consolidation studies.

end case — (See *hot case*.)

endorsement — An authorized marking on a mailpiece that shows handling instructions, a special service, or a request for an ancillary service.

Engineering Change Board (ECB) — A group of designated postal managers who must review and approve all changes to standard configurations of designated and controlled USPS equipment.

E

Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail — Two subclasses of Standard Mail (A) for mailpieces weighing less than 16 ounces and prepared in carrier route sequence. One subclass is available only to authorized mailers of Nonprofit Standard Mail. Mailers who sort bulk Standard Mail (A) by individual carrier routes earn a discount from the bulk rate. Such mailings must contain at least 200 mailpieces or weigh at least 50 pounds. Pieces must be part of a group of 10 or more sorted to the same carrier route. Pieces that cannot be sorted to carrier routes do not qualify for the lower rate and may not make up more than 5 percent of the mailing.

entry BMC — A bulk mail center (BMC), including its satellite auxiliary service facility (ASF) unless specified otherwise, at which mail is entered by the mailer.

entry facility — The USPS mail processing facility (e.g., bulk mail center) that serves the post office at which the mail is entered by the mailer. (Also called *origin facility*.)

entry post office (EPO) — A post office at which a Centralized Postage Payment System (CPP) mailer deposits mailings to be paid for through a central account maintained at the designated post office (DPO).

entry SCF — The sectional center facility (SCF) at which mail is entered by the mailer or that serves the post office where the mail is entered. An SCF can have responsibility for an area covering either single- or multi-3-digit ZIP Codes.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) — A federal program and USPS policy that provides equal opportunities for all personnel in employment, training, assignment, promotion, and job security without discrimination owing to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or physical or mental disability.

error — A missorted piece or unit of mail that must be rehandled within the post office before dispatch, as opposed to missent mail actually transported to another post office. (Compare with *missent/misdirected mail*.)

examined equipment — Empty sacks and pouches checked to determine reusability and to ensure that they contain no mail.

exceptional address — An alternative addressing format that indicates that the mailpiece should be delivered to the current resident if the addressee has moved. (Compare with *occupant address* and *simplified address*.)

exceptional dispatch — The delivery of a Periodicals mailing by the publisher to a post office other than offices of original entry or additional entry.

exchange — To dispatch mail to, or receive mail from, another country.

exchange office — (See *international exchange office*.)

executive and administrative schedule (EAS) — A salary structure that applies to most managerial and administrative USPS employees.

Executive Committee — A committee that assists the postmaster general in establishing management policy and objectives and approving major plans, programs, and budgets. It is composed of several senior officers, including the postmaster general and the deputy postmaster general.

Executive Leadership Program — Advanced management training for selected, experienced postal managers offered by specified universities.

executive sponsor — Supplies, supports, guides, and directs a postal reengineering project core team. The executive sponsor seeks funding for the effort, creates the management review board, and picks the project manager.

expanded ZIP Code — (See *ZIP+4*.)

expedited plant load shipment — An authorized verification and receipt of postage payment for mailable matter at the mailer's plant, prior to the mailer's transport of the shipment to a destination postal facility.

Expedited Preferential Mail Program — A program in which a letter carrier cases preferential mail before leaving the delivery unit, and nonpreferential mail after returning from the route. This provides earlier mail delivery to residential areas, with consistent delivery times.

expediter — A clerk in a large mail processing facility who at the cutoff times ensures the on-time dispatching and routing of all mail classes to the correct trucks.

express — (French) UPU term for an international service featuring special priority handling of letters and small packets weighing up to 4 pounds.



Express Mail — A mail class that provides expedited USPS overnight delivery service for mailable matter (up to 70 pounds), subject to certain standards. It is available in five basic domestic service offerings (Same Day Airport Service, Custom Designed Service, Post Office to Addressee Service, Post Office to Post Office Service, and Military Service). In addition, Express Mail International Service is available for foreign destinations. Express Mail is a USPS trademark.

Express Mail collection box — A specially marked white collection box for the public deposit of properly prepared and prepaid Express Mail items.

Express Mail International Service (EMS) — A service available to nearly 200 countries and territories, providing delivery to foreign cities in most cases within 1 to 3 days. This is the fastest, most reliable way to send letters, documents, merchandise, and merchandise samples abroad. Express Mail International Service is a USPS trademark. (See also *Postal Union Mail*.)

Express Mail Military Service (EMMS) — An Express Mail service available between the United States and designated army post office (APO) and fleet post office (FPO) addresses that provides Department of Defense and other authorized personnel stationed overseas with an expedited delivery service to or from the United States.

External First-Class Measurement — A system whereby a contractor performs independent service performance tests on certain types of First-Class Mail (that is, letters, flats, postcards) deposited in collection boxes and business mail chutes. It provides national, area, performance cluster, and city estimates, which are compared with USPS service goals. The results are released to the public quarterly by the consumer advocate.

face — The side of a mailpiece with the delivery address. To arrange mail in a uniform orientation, that is, with the delivery address facing forward and the postage stamp, meter stamp, or permit imprint positioned in the upper right corner. (See also *mail processing*.)

facer-canceler — Mail processing equipment that automatically faces letter-size mail in a uniform orientation and cancels the postage stamps. (See also *canceling machine*, *facing identification mark*, *postmarking stamp*, *roller-canceler*, and *tagging*.) (Called *Advanced Facer Canceler System (AFCS)* and *Mark II Facer Canceler/Edger Feeder*.)

facilities service office (FSO) — An office reporting to headquarters that manages facility activities such as real estate and building planning for a geographic area.

facility bypass — Presorted mail from or to any post office within a facility service area that does not require handling at the facility. For example, plant-loaded mail, turnaround mail at other offices within the facility service area, and mail sent directly to a bulk mail center. (See also *plant loading*.)

facing identification mark (FIM) — A series of vertical bars used by automated postal equipment that identifies, orients, and separates business reply mail, courtesy reply mail, and official mail. These bars are positioned in the upper right corner of the mailpiece to the left of the indicia (area reserved for postage). They serve as an orientation mark for automated facing and canceling equipment. (See also *facer-canceler*.)

facing slip — A paper label attached to the top of a mail package that shows the postal unit where the mail is due to be distributed, the class and type of mail, and the country or military post office. (See also *optional endorsement line*.)

facing table — A table on which letters are gathered and faced in the same direction before being run through a canceling machine. Some tables are fitted with conveyors to carry faced letters to one end of the table and stack them automatically. (Also called *pickup table*.)

false representation — (See *mail fraud*.)



FASTforward — A USPS-licensed automated system that updates addresses by identifying names and addresses for which current change-of-address orders are on file. A piece updated with *FASTforward* can be delivered directly to the new address instead of forwarded from the old address. The *FASTforward* systems interface with USPS-approved automation systems such as multiline optical character readers (MLOCs) and remote video encoding (RVE) operations. *FASTforward* is available in two applications. The Mailing List Correction application updates computerized name and address mailing lists before mailpiece creation. The MLOC/RVE application provides an on-piece address correction during mail processing before deposit into the mailstream. *FASTforward* is a USPS service mark.

Federal Register (FR) — A daily (working day) publication in which rules and proposed rules issued by the USPS and other federal or independent agencies are published. It is distributed by the Office of the Federal Register. (See also *Code of Federal Regulations*.)

FEDSTRIP (Federal Standard Requisitioning and Issue Procedures) — A system of processing government agency requisitions for supplies from the General Services Administration. The FEDSTRIP address is a six-character code identifying the agency to which goods and billings are sent. Items to be requisitioned are identified by a 13-digit National Stock Number (NSN).

field — A general designation for postal locations other than Headquarters and its related units. These include 10 areas and 85 districts.

field maintenance offices (FMO) — An office that performs maintenance work, which is not the responsibility of the GSA or a lessor, at associate post offices and other facilities.

final case — (See *hot case*.)

finance number — An assigned six-digit number that identifies an installation for processing its financial data. The first two are a state code; the next four are uniquely assigned from 0001 through 9999 to each installation in alphabetic order.

finance unit — A nondelivery post office branch or post office station that accepts mail from customers and provides services to customers and handles their mail. (Compare with *classified unit*.)

Financial Management Manual (FMM) — The directive that summarizes USPS financial policies, including accounting, accounts receivable, accounts payable, and operational planning, budgeting, and control of funds. Detailed USPS financial procedures are in various USPS handbooks. It is one of six USPS policy manuals.

fine cull machine — The equipment installed between the rough cull belt and the facer-canceler to remove odd-shaped items before the mail arrives at the canceling machine.

fingering the mail — Checking the addresses on mail between delivery stops on a carrier route before selecting mailpieces for the next stop.

firm direct — Mail to a company or business that, because of volume, justifies a separation on the primary or secondary sortation of incoming mail. (See also *direct*.)

firm holdout — A service for customers who receive 50 or more pieces on the first delivery trip on a carrier route. These customers may pick up their mail at the post office once a day. (Compare with *caller service* and *post office box service*.)

First-Class Mail (FCM) — A mail class that includes all matter wholly or partly in handwriting or typewriting, all actual and personal correspondence, all bills and statements of account, and all matter sealed or otherwise closed against inspection. First-Class Mail comprises three subclasses: Post and Postal Cards, Letters and Sealed Parcels, and Priority Mail. Any mailable matter may be sent as First-Class Mail. First-Class Mail is a USPS trademark.

first day cover (FDC) — In philately, an envelope with a newly issued postage stamp and a cancellation showing the date the postage stamp was first sold.

first-day-of-issue office — A post office (or offices) authorized to sell a new postage item on the first day of sale. (See also *hand-stamped cancellation*.) (Also called *first-day-of-sale office*.)

first flight cover — (obsolete) A philatelic cover carried on the airplane inaugurating a new airline flight. The cover was postmarked with the date of the flight. (See also *first day cover*.)



first handling pieces (FHP) — Letters, flats, and parcels sorted in a local post office for the first time.

fiscal periods — (1) Postal quarters consist of three designated accounting periods, except the fourth quarter of the postal fiscal year, which consists of four designated accounting periods. (2) Postal fiscal year consists of 13 designated accounting periods divided into postal quarters. The fiscal year number is the calendar year in which the postal fiscal year begins.

five-minute leeway rule — A deviation of up to 5 minutes (.08 hour) from an employee's established work schedule, allowed when congestion at the time clock or other conditions necessitate. The daily sum of deviations from the established work schedule may not exceed 5 minutes. Some employees who are allowed the 5-minute deviation for clocking purposes are paid on the basis of actual clock rings.

fixed conveyor — A lift for moving mail from floor to floor or a system of conveyors for an entire post office.

fixed cost — A cost that does not vary with the amount or degree of production. The costs that remain if an activity or process stops. (See also *variable cost*.)

flag pole — (informal) An overseas military post office that performs the functions of a domestic sectional center facility.

flat — The general term for flat-size mail, so called because the large mail is sorted without bending it so that the mail remains flat.

flat case — (See *case*.)

flat-size mail — A mailpiece that exceeds one of the dimensions for letter-size mail (11-1/2 inches long, 6-1/8 inches high, 1/4 inch thick) but that does not exceed the maximum dimension for this mail processing category (15 inches long, 12 inches high, 3/4 inch thick). The dimensions are slightly different for automation rate eligibility. It may be unwrapped, paper-wrapped, sleeve-wrapped, or enveloped.

flat sorting machine (FSM) — (See *multiposition flat sorting machine*.)

flat tray — A four-sided tray used in both mechanized and nonmechanized offices for flat-size mail. (Compare with *letter tray*.)

fleet post office (FPO) — (See *military post office*.)

fletter — An industry term used to describe a mailpiece that can be classified as letter-size mail but could also meet the standards for and be mailed as automation flat-size mail.

flexi-employee — A part-time USPS career employee who works a varied schedule and is not guaranteed 40 hours of work in a service week.

float — (See *tram*.)

FLTS — A code used on mail container labels that identifies the contents as flat-size mail.

foot carrier — A city carrier who delivers mail on foot.

foot route — A city route on which the letter carrier walks to deliver the mail rather than drive a vehicle as done on a mounted route.

forward — To redirect mail to the intended recipient's new delivery address in cases where Form 3575, *Change of Address Order*, or other written or personal notice has been filed with the local post office. (See also *Address Change Service*, *address correction service*, *Address Management*, and *ancillary services*.) (Also called *removal*.)

400 bin — A receptacle on the multiposition letter sorting machine that accumulates letters keyed to an unacceptable code, including letters for which the operator depressed more than three keys.

fourth-class mail — (obsolete) (See *Standard Mail (B)*.)

frame bar — Either the first bar or last bar of a POSTNET barcode. These two bars at each end of the barcode have no numeric significance.

franked mail — Official mail sent without postage prepayment by members and members-elect of Congress, the Vice President, and other specifically authorized individuals. Mail must relate to the official business, activities, and duties of the U.S. Congress. The mailpiece bears a written signature, printed facsimile signature, or other required marking instead of a postage stamp. (Compare with *penalty mail*.)

fraud order — An order issued by the judicial officer or a delegated assistant directing a postmaster to mark "FRAUDULENT" and to return to sender all mail addressed to any person or concern found violating the postal fraud or lottery statutes. (See also *mail fraud*.)

F

free matter — Material sent to or by the blind and other disabled persons and bearing the postage and fees paid indicia. It must be marked “Free Matter for the Blind or Handicapped.” (Also called *free matter for the blind and other handicapped persons*.)

frown — (informal) (See *smiles, frowns, and upside downs*.)

full flat tray — A tray that is sufficiently filled to allow or require preparation to the corresponding presort destination. A full flat tray contains at least enough mailpieces so that a single stack lying flat on the bottom of the tray reaches to the bottom of the handholds. Additional pieces must be added when possible to physically fill the tray.

full letter tray — A tray filled with faced, upright pieces, to at least three-fourths of its length. Each tray must be physically filled to capacity before the filling of the next tray. A tray with less mail may be prepared only if a less-than-full tray or an overflow tray is permitted by the standards for the rate claimed.

full sack — A sack is considered full when the minimum volume standards for the mail class and rate claimed are met.

function — A specific set of skills and resources that can be used to perform one or more activities that make up a postal process. Usually, several functions are associated with a single process.

gateway — An important transportation center, especially for air transportation, where mail routes converge and mail is rerouted for onward dispatch. (Also called *consolidation point*.)

general delivery — An alternate delivery service that allows customers with proper identification to pick up mail at post offices. Provided primarily at offices without letter carrier delivery or for transients and customers who do not have a permanent address or who prefer not to use post office boxes. (See also *poste restante*.) (Compare with *caller service*.)

general mail system (GMS) — The entire postal system, including the bulk mail network and all postal field operations. (Compare with *National Bulk Mail System*.)

general post office (GPO) — (obsolete) (See *main post office*.)

general purpose mail container (GPMC) — A wheeled container that is nestable (that is, it can be stored in an L-shaped configuration) and is used to transport, stage, and distribute sacks, trays, and bundles. More than 5 feet tall, with a capacity of 1,200 pounds of mail, the container can be pushed by hand or pulled by tractor. (Compare with *eastern region mail container*.)

general scheme — A pattern of distribution of mail for a state or section of a state that shows the route or supply by which each post office receives mail.

girth — The measurement around the thickest part of a mailpiece.

Global ePOST — An electronic-to-hard copy service that provides mailers with one-stop shopping for international mailings. Designed for large-volume mailers needing a fast, secure, and reliable way to send international mail, such as invoices, orders, account statements, and advertisements.

Global Package Link — An air export service that provides end-to-end solutions (e.g., varying service levels, customs clearance, tracking) for international volume package shipping.

Global Priority Mail (GPM) — An expedited international service for the shipment of documents, correspondence, and merchandise, featuring a 4-business-day delivery standard to selected countries in Europe, the Pacific Rim, and Canada.

G

gondola — (informal) A six-wheeled container or tub used to move pouches, sacks, and nonsackable mail. (See also *basket*.)

Governors — (See *Board of Governors*.)

gravity roller conveyor — (See *conveyor*.)

gross combined weight (GCW) — The combined total vehicle weight of a tractor and trailer.

gurney — (See *basket*.)

hamper — A canvas-lined tub supported by a steel and wood frame, used to transport bulk, bundled, and sacked mail (from 440 to 800 pounds) between postal operations.

handbook — A USPS directive that documents the procedures needed to implement USPS policy stated in manuals.

hand-stamped cancellation — A cancellation on postage stamps that is applied manually (rather than mechanically with a canceling machine) on mailpieces that are nonmachinable or do not meet USPS dimensions. It includes the standard cancellation with killer bars, the circular cancellation without killer bars, the first-day-of-issue cancellation, the bull's eye cancellation, and the pictorial cancellation. (See also *first-day-of-issue office*.)

hang the rack — (See *dress the rack*.)

hards — (informal) Mail laid aside pending instructions on proper dispatch. (Also called *selects*.)

hash — (informal) Mail that is not required to be ready for close connections and not in sufficient quantity to warrant a definite separation. (Also called *layover mail* and *house mail*.)

hazardous matter — Any item that is mailable only under specific USPS restrictions and that require specific endorsements because of potential harm to the mail or persons or property involved in moving the mail. This category includes chemicals, toy propellants and some safety fuses, explosives, compressed gases, radioactive materials, biological materials, magnetized materials, and dry ice. (Also called *dangerous goods* and *hazardous materials*.) (Compare with *perishable matter* and *restricted matter*.)

header — (See *case label*.)

head-out — The starting point of a mail run or trip.

Headquarters — The national USPS unit that directs administration, policy, and operations. It is located at 475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Washington, DC 20260-0001. (Compare with *area* and *district*.)

heavy — (informal) (See *bulkier*.)

H

highway contract route (HCR) — A route served by a postal contractor to carry mail by highway between designated points. Some of these routes include mail delivery to boxes along the line of travel. (See also *tailgate exchange*.) (Formerly called *star route*.)

hit — (informal) To postmark mail with a hand-stamped cancellation.

holdout — Mail held for handling and dispatch and for businesses that receive a large volume of mail.

horizontal bars — A series of uniform, wide bars, parallel to the length of the mailpiece, printed immediately below the no postage necessary endorsement on the right side of business reply mail.

hot case — (informal) A special distribution case in a delivery unit for last-minute sorting of mail. The letter carrier collects this mail before leaving for his or her route. (Also called *end case* and *final case*.)

hot house — (informal) An area used to separate and dispatch preferential mail. (Also called *hot spot*.)

hot mail — (informal) (See *preferential mail*.)

hot stamp — (informal) Stamp ink that contains a substance that becomes luminescent when passed through a facer-canceler. (See also *luminescent indicia detector* and *tagging*.)

house mail — (informal) (See *hash*.)

Hub and Spoke Program (HASP) — For surface mail, primarily for 2-day committed mail. The HASP includes a central point (“hub”) where mail for a group of offices (“spokes”) can be unloaded from a series of incoming trips, massed according to their intended destination, and then sent on to that destination on another trip. Savings are realized because each trip does not have to drive to each individual office or “spoke” to drop off just a portion of its total load capacity.

identical piece — An individual mailpiece that has the same mail classification and physical aspect, size, and weight as all other pieces in a presorted mailing.

idle vehicle time — The period during a scheduled tour when a vehicle is inactive.

improperly returned — Mail erroneously returned to the sender.

incoming mail — Mail received by a postal facility, most commonly for distribution and delivery within the delivery area of the receiving facility. (See also *destinating mail*.) (Compare with *outgoing mail*.)

incoming mail processing center (IMPC) — A mail processing facility that serves as a hub for incoming mail that destines at other processing or delivery facilities in its service area.

Incoming Secondary Sorting Program (ISSP) — A computer program used to analyze and plan cost-effective changes to secondary sorting operations performed on incoming mail in large postal facilities, using a multiposition letter sorting machine.

indemnity claim — A customer request for reimbursement filed for loss or damage to an item mailed by insured mail, collect on delivery, registered mail (with postal insurance), or Express Mail.

indicia — An imprinted designation on a mailpiece that denotes postage payment (for example, a permit imprint in place of a postage stamp or a meter stamp).

industrial trailer — A platform trailer (3 feet wide and 7 feet long) with two fixed and two swivel casters and end racks. It is used generally at postal terminals to move sacked mail between operations and can be coupled with other trailers to form a train drawn by an electric tractor.

information service center (ISC) — A facility that houses one or more accounting, computer operations, or software support centers.

information system — An engineered arrangement of computers, communications facilities, software code, and data designed to support the USPS business process.



information systems service center (ISSC) — A software design and support facility that provides support for postal activities. (Formerly called a *postal data center*.)

Information Technology (IT) — A package of equipment and/or systems related to data and/or communications that can be used as an enabler of USPS process reengineering.

Infrastructure Tool Kit (ITK) — A standardized suite of software products based on the business needs of the Postal Service and the planned direction of the Postal Computing Environment. This suite of products, called the USPS Infrastructure Tool Kit (ITK), is intended to institutionalize a core set of integrated commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) products across all USPS facilities for use in all development, support, and maintenance activities.

insert — A letter, card, periodical, or other item placed in an envelope, or similar container for mailing, especially an addressed letter or card placed in a window envelope.

Inspection Service — The federal law enforcement agency of the USPS that investigates criminal acts against the mails and misuse of the postal system; protects mail, postal funds, and postal property; and conducts internal audits. It is headed by the chief inspector.

insured mail — A special service to customers who pay a fee in advance to obtain payment in the event that the mail is lost, rifled, or damaged. (See also *collect on delivery*, *Express Mail*, and *registered mail*.)

integrated retail terminal (IRT) — A microcomputer used at retail windows to weigh items, calculate postage and fees, and perform postal accounting functions.

interline movement — Mail moving between origin and destination by connecting schedules of more than one air, highway, or rail carrier. (See also *intermodal*.)

intermodal — The use of two or more modes of transportation to move mail from origin to destination. (See also *interline movement*.)

Internal Web — The Web site containing information accessible by postal personnel only (<http://blue.usps.gov>).

International Business Reply Service (IBRS) — In international mail, a service that allows envelopes and postcards to be distributed in certain foreign countries for return without postage prepayment to the original sender in the United States. (Compare with *business reply mail*.)

International Electronic Post (INTELPOST) — A facsimile message service available, at certain large post offices, between the United States and more than 40 foreign countries. A black-and-white image of the original (hard copy) document is printed and delivered to the addressee either the same day or the next day. INTELPOST is a USPS trademark.

international exchange office (IEO) — A post office or airport mail center/facility authorized to exchange international mail and military mail, both air and surface, with another country.

international mail — Mail originating in one country and destinating in another. It is classified as Postal Union Mail (that is, letters and cards (LC) and other articles (AO)), postal parcels, and Express Mail International Service.

International Mail Manual (IMM) — The directive that contains postage rates and classification and other regulations for mailings bound for other countries. It is one of six USPS policy manuals.

International Merchant Purchase Authorization Card (IMPAC) — The official name for the VISA credit card used to purchase expense items, capital property, and vehicle parts.

International Package Consignment Service (IPCS) — (See *Global Package Link*.)

International Priority Airmail (IPA) — An international service for all mail items except postal parcels. This service is designed to be 1 day faster than regular airmail, provided that mailers meet minimum volume and sortation requirements. It is available to all countries except Canada. International Priority Airmail is a USPS trademark. (See also *Priority Mail*.)

international reply coupon — A coupon that is exchangeable for postage (representing the minimum postage on an unregistered air letter) at post offices in member countries of the Universal Postal Union. The coupon is sold by post offices worldwide.



International Standard Book Number (ISBN) — A publication number issued by the Library of Congress that identifies a specific book or other nonperiodical document.

International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) — A publication number issued by the Library of Congress that identifies a specific periodical (such as a publication sent at a Periodicals rate).

International Surface Air Lift (ISAL) — A bulk mailing service for fast, economical international delivery of any periodical publication, advertising mail, catalog, other printed matter, or a small packet. Mail is airlifted directly to the country of destination or routed through key distribution centers. (See also *surface airlift mail*.)

irregular parcel — A mail processing category for a parcel that does not meet the dimensions of a machinable parcel.

irregular parcels and pieces (IPP) — Standard Mail items that are nonmachinable by parcel sorting machine (for example, a noncaseable flat, small cube or fragile parcel, paper or sleeve-wrapped catalog, and sackable roll, tube, or film). (Formerly called *small parcels and rolls*.)



Jiffy bag — A padded mailing envelope that is sold in various sizes by post offices. Jiffy is a commercial trademark.

jog — To hit or shake a handful of mailpieces against a hard surface to align their edges. (See also *edge*.)

jogger — A vibrating machine that aligns the edges of vertically stacked mailpieces.

jointly addressed mail — Mail designated for more than one addressee (for example, “Mr. and Mrs. John Doe”), neither of which may control delivery of mail addressed to the other.

Jx — (French) Abbreviation for journaux (newspapers).



keyboard — The 20-key, two-row, piano-type keyboard on the multiposition letter sorting machine. The operator presses one, two, three, or four keys to represent one-, two-, three-, or four-digit numbers sequentially.

keyboard sort — To sort mail by operating the keyboard of equipment such as the multiposition letter sorting machine.

keyline — Optional mailer information printed at least two lines above the delivery address or in the lower left corner of the mailpiece. Under some postage payment systems, a required data line that contains specific information about the mailpiece.

keys and identification devices — A separate rate category for keys and identification cards or tags that bear or have attached instructions to return the pieces and a guarantee of postage payment on delivery.

killer bars — The parallel lines that extend to the right of the circular postmark for canceling the postage stamp so that it cannot be reused. The lines are part of most standard machine and hand-stamped cancellations.

known office of publication — The business office of a Periodicals publication that is in the city where the original entry for Periodicals mailing privileges are authorized.



label — A strip of paper (printed singly or in multiples) that shows destination, mail class or type, office of distribution, and routing instructions. It is placed in the label holders of cases, pouches, or sacks. Also, a type of directive that provides limited information or instruction and can be fastened (glued or tied) to something such as a wall, door, bumper, or package. To imprint routing, destination, or other information on a label or facing slip. Also, to insert labels in the holders of pouches and sacks before dispatch.

label carrier — A card or paper stock of varying sizes that serves as the backing for an adhesive label that shows the delivery address. It may be affixed to the cover of the publication or inserted inside a polybag mailer.

Label Printing Center (LPC) — A large facility at the material distribution center in Topeka, KS, that prints sack and tray labels, case labels, facing slips, and scheme cards.

labor distribution code (LDC) — A two-digit code designating personnel costs for specific activities at all postal organizations and installations. (See also *activity code* and *designation code*.)

Labor Utilization Report (LUR) — A report that reflects employee current pay period and year-to-date financial data about hours worked; types of leave taken; and hours, salaries, and benefits paid. The data is classified by USPS functional area, with each area subdivided by labor distribution code; it is available at various organizational levels (that is, finance number through national format).

LA lock (LA) — A common lock for mailbags and Parcel Post sacks. The lock is U-shaped and is made of brass or steel. The words *U.S. Mail* are engraved on the front of the lock. It was developed by a mail equipment official named Burton Andrus; the acronym stands for Lock Andrus.

lawn crossing — The practice of taking a shortcut across the customer's lawn during delivery; it is permitted unless it is hazardous or the customer objects.

layover mail — (See *hash*.)



lead facilitator (LF) — The lead facilitator for a postal reengineering project core team is usually a hired contractor who has a broad experience in reengineering and in the subject matter of the reengineering. The LF provides the day-to-day technical direction for the project core team in accomplishing the tasks in a reengineering methodology.

leaner — (informal) (See *adjustable platform stool*.)

leave — Authorized absence (such as annual or sick leave) from official duty.

less-than-full tray — A tray that contains mail for the same destination that was not preceded by a full tray for that destination. Less-than-full trays may be prepared only if permitted by the standards for the rate claimed. (See also *full flat tray* and *full letter tray*.)

letter — According to the Private Express Statutes, a message directed to a specific person or an address and recorded in or on a tangible object. Also a shortened way to refer to letter-size mail.

letter carrier — A USPS employee who delivers and collects mail on foot or by vehicle in a prescribed area. The term usually refers to a city carrier rather than to a rural carrier or highway contract carrier. (Compare with *carrier*.)

letter case — (See *case*.)

letter chute — (See *mailchute*.)

letter jacket — A durable envelope used for registered mail letters.

letter package — A box, packet, or thick envelope that is larger in size and/or heavier in weight than an ordinary business letter and is paid for at the letter class rate of postage. It can be exclusively correspondence in combination with other mailable items. The weight limit for letter packages is 4 pounds to all countries, except for registered letter packages to Canada, which can weigh up to 66 pounds.

letter-size mail — A mail processing category of mailpieces, including cards, that do not exceed any of the dimensions for letter-size mail (that is, 11-1/2 inches long, 6-1/8 inches high, 1/4 inch thick).



letter sorting machine (LSM) — A large mechanized machine that can sort letters into as many as 277 bins. Operators physically read the address and then manually enter an extraction code, via keyboard, based on their memory of the sort scheme loaded into the machine's computer software. (See also *multiposition letter sorting machine*.)

letter tray — A flat cardboard or plastic container for sorted letter-size mail that can hold several hundred letters. Various kinds and sizes of trays are used in place of sacks or pouches for transporting mail within and between major postal facilities. Certain rate categories, especially automation rates, require the use of trays. (Compare with *flats tray*.)

letter tray transporter — A cart, with skeletal frames, used to transport plastic letter trays in plant and between postal facilities.

letters and cards (LC) — A category of international mail that consists of ordinary letters containing personal correspondence; letter packages containing correspondence and/or other mailable items; postcards and postal cards, and aerogrammes. The *LC* designation is derived from the French term *lettres and cartes*.

Library Mail — A Standard Mail subclass for items on loan from or exchanged between academic institutions, public libraries, museums, and other authorized organizations. Books, sound recordings, academic theses, and certain other items may be mailed at the Library Mail rate if marked on the outside of the mailpieces as "Library Mail" or "Library Rate."

line haul charge — The fee based on the distance and quantity (weight or space occupied) of mail transported by highway or rail between two points. This charge is distinguished from the terminal charge for loading and unloading mail.

live mail — The mail in USPS custody that is being processed, transported, or delivered. (Compare with *dead mail*.)

loading conveyor — (See *conveyor*.)

Loan, Transfer, and Training System (LTATS) — A payroll software application that provides for the keyboard entry of loan, transfer, and training data via Form 1236-A, *Weekly Loan, Transfer, and Training Hours*. It is used to produce the Loan, Transfer and Training Hours Report.



lobby — The public area for conducting postal business in a post office, post office station, or post office branch. To enhance corporate identity, it is maintained according to established postal guidelines (for example, painting or redecorating).

lobby director — An employee who assists customers in retail units during peak periods by directing them to self-service if appropriate, determining service needs, or assisting with package preparation and forms.

lobby sweep — A procedure to reduce customer waiting time whereby a postal employee dispenses information, forms and notified mail articles to customers in line at a post office.

local buying — The authority to buy and pay for day-to-day operational needs locally (for example, at the post office level without approval from a purchasing and materials service center).

local collection box — A street letterbox where local mail can be deposited for local delivery with the local postmark.

local mail — Mail addressed for delivery within the postal area of the post office where the piece is mailed.

local postmark — A cancellation that a post office without mail processing operations applies to postage stamps, if requested by the mailer. It shows the city, state, and ZIP Code of the post office.

local service air carrier — A regional air carrier that provides local, short-haul service to supplement mail trunkline operations of larger air carriers.

lock — A device used to seal registered mail and other valuable mail shipments and for locking surface pouches of First-Class Mail.

lockbox — (obsolete) (See *post office box*.)

lock holder — A small canvas bag that hangs on the sorting rack and holds surplus locks.

log — (informal) A very heavy parcel. (Also called *truck*.)

long-life vehicle (LLV) — A city delivery van with an aluminum body that can carry 1,000 pounds of cargo. It is designed to last 24 years.

loop — (See *park and loop*.)



loose in the mails — Material separated from the addressed envelope, container, or wrapper in which it was mailed.

loose-loaded parcels — Parcels loaded into a trailer or van without being enclosed in sacks or containers. (Compare with *bedloaded bundles*.)

loose-pack sack — A No. 2 sack (for flats) or a No. 3 sack (for letters or flats) that contains untied, faced, and stacked mail for dispatch.

loose sack — A sack, pouch, or irregular mailpiece transported outside an air container at a specific transportation rate.

LTRS — A code used on the label of a container (for example, sack, tray, or pallet) that identifies the contents as letter-size mail.

luminescent indicia detector (LID) — A device on the facer-canceler that detects luminescent material in the ink on postage stamps and meter stamps. This allows automated facing and canceling of mail. (See also *hot stamp*.)

luminescent ink — Indicia or stamp ink that contains light-reflecting additives (such as phosphor) that allow a facer-canceler machine to face and cancel letter-size mail.

M

MACH — A code used on the label of a container (such as a sack or pallet) that identifies the contents as machinable parcels.

machinable — The capacity of a mailpiece to be sorted by mail processing equipment. (Compare with *nonmachinable*.)

machinable parcel — A mail processing category for a mailpiece that is not less than 6 inches long, 3 inches high, 1/4 inch thick, and 8 ounces in weight; and not more than 34 inches long, 17 inches high, 17 inches thick, and 35 pounds in weight (except for books and other printed matter, which must not weigh more than 25 pounds). This mail can be safely sorted by mail processing machinery such as a parcel sorting machine.

machine readable — The capability of a delivery address being interpreted electronically by automated mail processing equipment.

made-up mail — Fully processed mail ready for dispatch and transportation.

mail — Any mailable matter that is accepted for mail processing and delivery by the USPS. Also, the sum total of the mail at any time that is in USPS custody. To deposit a mailable item in a collection box or present the item (or a mailing for large quantities of mailpieces) at a post office or business mail entry unit. (See also *mailstream*.)

mailback service — A service available to servicers and dealers of philatelic covers at a fee set by the Philatelic Fulfillment Service Center. It is generally permitted on pictorial, standard, or certain first-day-of issue cancellations on envelopes, postal cards, or other memorabilia.

mailbag — A general term for a sack or pouch.

mailbox — Any private receptacle or container used by customers to receive mail either at their residence or at the curbside.

mailchute — A glass-fronted tube with a mailslot on each floor of a tall building. Letters are dropped for collection through the chute into a box on the ground floor.

mail class — The classification of domestic mail according to content (for example, personal correspondence versus printed advertising). It is codified in the Domestic Mail Classification Schedule.

mail condition report — A system of reports that identifies and monitors problems in mail processing within a postal facility. It supports the development of resources necessary to meet the demands of fluctuating mail volume and service commitments.

mail count — An enumeration (in pieces or pounds) of the amount of mail sorted or handled.

mail cover — A record of information on the outside (cover) of any mailpiece. It is kept to locate a fugitive, protect national security, or obtain evidence of a crime punishable by a prison term exceeding 1 year. This record is one of the few ways information on mail may be disclosed outside the USPS, and its use is lawful only if authorized by postal regulations. (Compare with *cover*.)

mailer — An entity that prepares and/or presents a mailing to the USPS. In some cases, a mailer is the agent for the actual owner of the mail.

Mailers Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC) — A group of mailing industry representatives and USPS officials that provides technical information, advice, and recommendations about postal services, programs, regulations, and requirements. The members represent associations of large and small commercial mailing organizations, related mailing services, and various industry groups.

mail fraud — A scheme to get money or other assets from a postal customer by offering a product, service, or investment opportunity that does not live up to its claims. Prosecutors must prove that the claims were intentionally misrepresented and that the mails were used to carry out the scheme. (See also *fraud order*.)

Mailgram — A hard-copy message transmitted electronically by Western Union and delivered by the USPS. Mailgram is a trademark of Western Union. (See also *servicing post office*.)

mail handler — An employee who loads, unloads, and moves mail; cancels postage stamps; and performs other duties related to the moving and processing of mail.

mailing — A group of mailpieces within the same mail class and mail processing category that may be sorted together under the appropriate standards. Also, the action of depositing or presenting mail at a post office.

M

mailing list — A group of names and addresses to which mailpieces in the corresponding mailing are addressed.

mailing list service — A USPS service available for a fee that mailers use to correct name and address lists, to correct occupant lists, or to sort mailing lists on cards by 5-digit ZIP Code. The USPS also provides address changes to election boards and voter registration commissions.

mailing statement — (obsolete) (See *postage statement*.)

mailpiece — A single addressed article of mail, usually a letter, flat, or postal card. The term can also be applied to a parcel. (Compare with *piece*.)

Mailpiece Quality Control (MQC) — A self-study training program designed to provide customers the knowledge and skills necessary to administer a Mailpiece Quality Control program within their company or organization.

mailpouch — (See *pouch*.)

mail preparation unit — A unit in which specific tasks are performed to facilitate the flow of mail to distribution or dispatch operations.

mail priority — The preference that private carriers such as airlines give to mail as compared with other cargo.

mail processing — An integrated group of subfunctions required to sort and distribute mail for dispatch and eventual delivery. The principal subfunctions are culling, edging and stacking, facing and canceling, sorting, tying, pouching, bundling, sacking, and traying. (See also *advanced facer-canceler*, *barcode clear zone*, *bundle*, *cancel*, *cull*, and *face*.)

mail processing category — One of five designations for mail (flat-size mail, letter-size mail, machinable parcel, outside parcel, and irregular parcel), based on physical dimensions (height, length, and thickness) and on weight.

mail processing equipment — Machinery and related apparatus used to perform distribution of mail and other functions such as canceling and culling. This includes automated and mechanized machinery as well as distribution cases. (Compare with *mail transport equipment*.)

Mail Processing Work Credit System (MPWCS) — A part of the Management Operating Data System that measures the efficiency of distribution and nondistribution separations.

mail receptacle — A privately owned mailbox or a USPS collection box or other container used to receive or deposit mail.

mail recovery center (MRC) — A postal facility designated only to receive and attempt to return undeliverable and unforwardable mail of obvious value. Unpaid mail without a return address is also sent to one of these facilities. (See also *forward* and *undeliverable as addressed*.) Formerly called *dead letter office*, *dead letter branch*, or *dead parcel branch*.

mailsack — (See *sack*.)

mail stop order — An order issued by the USPS Judicial Officer that directs the post office of delivery to return to the sender any mail responding to a false representation or lottery scheme.

mailstream — The total live mail at any time in a USPS mail processing function. Also a mailing industry term that describes the assembly line production of mailpieces in a highly automated plant.

mail transport equipment (MTE) — Containers used for mail processing or transportation within or between facilities by the USPS, its customers, or contractors. These include general purpose mail containers, tray carts, bulk mail center containers, platform trucks/trailers, hampers, special purpose containers, in-plant and surface trays, pallets, sacks, and pouches. (See also *nutting truck*.) (Compare with *mail processing equipment*.)

mail transport equipment center (MTEC) — A field installation designated to receive, store, ship, examine, sort, pack, and condemn mailbags. It also issues, stores, and ships locks for mailbag equipment.

main post office (MPO) — The primary postal facility in a city where the post office uses subordinate post office stations or post office branches. It provides complete postal services to a specified geographic area. (Formerly called *general post office*.)

main stock — All postage stamps and postal stationery, nonpostal stamps, and philatelic products received by a post office but not yet consigned to the main office window unit or to window clerks.

M

make up — To prepare mail for mail processing. To separate and group mail for dispatch.

Managed Mail Program (MMP) — A distribution system that masses mail at a mechanized or automated area distribution center (ADC) for receipt and five-digit distribution within the ADC area. The system identifies, on first handling, First-Class Mail that cannot make next-day delivery owing to destination distance; the system also eliminates a secondary sorting for this mail so that it can be airlifted to the destination plant for processing during nonrush hours the next day. (See also *airlift*.)

managed mail tray (MM) — A stackable cardboard or plastic container used with an enclosing cardboard sleeve. It is used to transport letter-size mail between selected postal facilities or between a mailer's mailroom or plant and a specific postal facility.

management instruction (MI) — A brief, time-sensitive directive that is codified to show the relationship to one of the six policy manuals. It is issued by Headquarters and has replaced regional instructions.

Management Operating Data System (MODS) — A system used with the Postal Source Data System that provides local postal management with information on the relationship between workloads and actual hours versus planned hours.

management review board (MRB) — A select group of stakeholders in the outcome of a USPS business process reengineering. It is the directing body of a reengineering body composed of peers of the executive sponsor. The MRB members are selected by the executive sponsor to represent their functions or processes that will be impacted by the reengineering. The MRB members meet on a periodic basis to hear the progress and reports of the project core team.

management sectional center (MSC) — (obsolete) (See *sectional center facility*.)

Manifest Mailing System (MMS) — A postage payment system that enables the USPS to accept and verify permit imprint mailings that contain nonidentical-weight and/or nonidentical-rate pieces of the same mail class (except Periodicals) and same mail processing category. These pieces are prepared by the mailer according to certain standards. (Compare with *Optional Procedure Mailing System*.)

manifold book — A document (Form 3854, *Manifold Registry Dispatch Book*) that contains perforated forms to track registered mail items.

Manpower Scheduling and Staffing Program (MSSP) — A computer program that helps postmasters improve mail processing. The program obtains cost savings by matching mail volume and scheduling and staffing through the use of Post Office Scheduler and by methods improvement and other production control techniques.

manual — A directive that contains USPS policy. The former Postal Service Manual was reissued into these six subject manuals: Administrative Support Manual (ASM); Domestic Mail Manual (DMM); Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM); Financial Management Manual (FMM); International Mail Manual (IMM); and Postal Operations Manual (POM).

manual distribution — The sortation of mail into cases by hand as opposed to mechanized means (such as a letter sorting machine) or automated means (such as a multiline optical character reader).

marginal marking — Any notation or printing on the selvage of a sheet of postage stamps that can include the USPS copyright notice, plate number, control marking, informational inscription, or USPS slogan.

marking — Specifically, a notation on a mailpiece that shows mail class or rate. In general, any notation or endorsement.

Mark II — (See *facer-canceler*.)

markup — A mailpiece that is undeliverable as originally addressed. It must be endorsed to show the next address for attempted delivery or other disposition, such as return to sender. (See also *Computerized Forwarding System II* and *undeliverable as addressed*.)

mass — To combine mail from identical separations on a number of distribution cases (for example, combining the mail for ZIP Code 20001 from five different distribution cases).

massing point — A selected post office or point where mail is combined for dispatch.

massing scheme — (See *state dispatch list*.)

M

material distribution center (MDC) — A postal supply center that stocks retail supplies and equipment, forms and directives, spare parts, and expendable items.

maximum size standards — The greatest size (length, height, and thickness) and weight as determined by mail class and subclass. In international mail, these standards may vary by country.

M-bag — A special direct sack for mailers who wish to send printed matter to a single addressee in other countries.

mean time to repair (MTTR) — A statistical record of the average time required to repair an item, such as a piece of equipment or a component.

mechanical reject — In mail processing, a mailpiece that a sorting machine cannot handle for a physical reason, such as a machine malfunction. (Compare with *read reject*.)

merchandise return service — A special service whereby an authorized company provides a customer with a special mailing tag or label to return a shipment without postage prepayment. The company pays the return postage. (Compare with *business reply mail*.)

merchandise sample — Any product presented for the mailstream. Specifically, a Standard Mail (A) mailpiece that is more than 5 inches wide, 5 inches high, or 1/4 inch thick, or is nonuniform in thickness. When mailed at a bulk rate, the piece must be mailed with a detached address label and distributed in a mailing to at least 25 percent of the addresses in a five-digit ZIP Code area.

metered mail — Any mail class (except Periodicals) with postage printed by a USPS-approved postage meter. This mail is entitled to all privileges and subject to all conditions that apply to the various mail classes.

metered postage — Postage printed by a mechanical or electronic imprinter directly onto the mailpiece or onto gummed tape or labels affixed to the mailpiece. It may be used on all mail classes except Periodicals.

metered reply mail — A preprinted return envelope or card provided as a courtesy to customers. The postage is prepaid as a meter impression by the postage meter license holder on the return envelope or card for the responding customer. (Compare with *business reply mail* and *courtesy reply mail*.)

meter stamp — A postage imprint (either on meter tape or as a direction impression) applied in the upper right corner of the envelope, address label, or tag. The type, size, and style of the imprint must be fixed when the postage meter is approved for manufacture by the USPS. For letter-size mail, the imprint must be set in fluorescent ink.

meter tape — The USPS-approved tape on which metered postage is imprinted.

Methods Improvement Program — Standard Operating Procedures (MIP-SOP) — A delivery program that helps managers identify and correct inefficient practices. The program stipulates procedures to achieve service goals and minimize daily operating costs.

Micro Mark — A retrofit to the Mark II facer-canceler that replaces the old vacuum tube electronics with solid state and microprocessor electronics.

migratory-bird hunting and conservation stamp — A nonpostal stamp required by federal law for hunting ducks, geese, etc. This type of stamp is sold on behalf of the Department of the Interior by large post offices and by post offices where justified by customer demand. (Also called *bird stamp* and *duck stamp*.)

military mail — Domestic mail and international mail that bears a U.S. military delivery address or return address and that, in some stage of its transmission, is in the possession of the Department of Defense.

military ordinary mail (MOM) — A category for Department of Defense official mail sent at Periodicals or Standard Mail rates that requires faster service than airlift transportation to, from, and between military post offices. This mail is moved by surface transportation to a gateway facility and from there by air at a specific transportation rate and service standard. (Compare with *parcel airlift*.)

military post office — A branch of a designated USPS civilian post office, which falls under the jurisdiction of the postmaster of either New York or San Francisco. It is operated by the Department of Defense to serve military personnel overseas or aboard ships where the USPS does not operate and a military situation requires the service. It may be either an army post office (APO) that serves the Army or Air Force or a fleet post office (FPO) that serves the Coast Guard, Navy, or Marine Corps.

military post office cancellation — (See *cancellation*.)

M

minimum size standard — The smallest dimensions permitted for all mailable matter or for a specific mail processing category or specific rate. Except for keys and identification devices, a mailpiece less than 1/4 inch thick must be rectangular and meet the following minimum criteria (otherwise, it is nonmailable and must be returned to sender):

At least 5 inches long.

At least 3-1/2 inches high.

At least 0.007 inch thick.

(See also *aspect ratio* and *nonstandard size mail*.)

mint set — A folder that contains all the commemorative stamps or definitive stamps and postal stationery issued during a calendar year. The set contains a brief description of each stamp subject.

miscoded/misziped mail — Mail with an incorrect ZIP Code as part of the delivery address.

missent/misdirected mail — Mail that has not been dispatched according to official schemes, schedules, or special orders. (Compare with *error*.)

missort/missorted mail — Mail incorrectly distributed. To distribute mail to the wrong separation or bin. (See also *throwback*.)

mixed class — A mailing containing more than one mail class. With certain exceptions, the postage on the entire piece or package is charged at the rate of the higher class.

mobile post office — A trailer unit equipped to handle all major postal needs as an emergency or temporary replacement post office.

mobile vehicle repair facility (MVRF) — A 40-foot van equipped as a one-bay garage that goes to postal facilities to service vehicles.

money order — (See *postal money order*.)

motorist mailchute — (See *snorkel collection box*.)

motorized carrier — A letter carrier who uses a vehicle to deliver mail. The route is called a motorized or mounted route.

motor vehicle operator (MVO) — A craft employee hired primarily to drive postal vehicles.

mounted route — A city route on which the letter carrier drives a vehicle to deliver the mail rather than walk as done on a foot route.

multicommodity machine (MCM) — A vending machine that has the capability to dispense multiple varieties of postal commodities.

Multiline Accuracy Support System (MASS) — A tool (similar to the Coding Accuracy Support System) that accesses and checks the address-matching software used by customers' multiline optical character readers.

multiline optical character reader (MLOCR) — An optical character reader that reads and interprets more than one line of the delivery address on a mailpiece.

Multiple Entry Point Payment System (MEPPS) — A procedure that simplifies postage payment and documentation for mailings generated by computer-supported mailer systems.

multiposition flat sorting machine (MPFSM) — A machine that mechanically sorts flats by ZIP Code. Using four operators, it distributes between 10,000 and 13,500 pieces per hour into one of one hundred bins or stackers.

multiposition letter sorting machine (MPLSM) — A letter sorting machine that consists of a paneled mainframe with multiple operator consoles (typically 12) and 277 bins. It has the capability of processing 43,200 faced letter-size mailpieces per hour.

MXD — A code used on mail container labels that identifies the contents as mixed mail for different destinations (such as area distribution center packages for multiple area distribution centers).



national account manager (NAM) — A USPS employee who establishes and maintains communications with one of the largest mailing customers in the country who has multiple mailing sites located in several geographic areas. This individual works with a team of supporting staff to improve service, sell postal products, implement programs, and present customer viewpoints to postal management.

National Air and Surface System (NASS) — A computerized system operated at the St. Louis Accounting Service Center and 23 distribution networks offices to produce dispatch and labeling information for all mail classes. It is used by mail processing facilities. (See also *accounting service center*.)

National Bulk Mail System (NBMS) — A network of 21 highly mechanized bulk mail centers (BMCs) and 10 auxiliary service facilities (ASFs) linked together and to other postal facilities by a transportation network. Each BMC or ASF processes originating and destinating bulk mail for a specific geographic area. (Compare with *general mail system*.)

National Change of Address System (NCOA) — An address correction service provided to mailers by the USPS through its licensees. All change-of-address data submitted by relocating customers are transmitted daily from Computerized Forwarding System (CFS) sites to the USPS National Customer Support Center (NCSC) at Memphis, TN. The NCSC consolidates the data, places it on computer tape, and then standardizes the address against the ZIP+4 code database. The licensees match computerized mailing lists with change-of-address data, and NCOA provides current standardized and ZIP+4 coded addresses for all residential and business movers before the mail enters the mailstream. (See also *Address Change Service*.)

National Customer Support Center (NCSC) — A USPS organization that provides information, services, and products (for example, zone charts, directories, software programs, testing of ZIP+4 code or delivery point code address matching software) that are designed to improve the quality of addressing for mailings that qualify for certain rates.

National Deliverability Index (NDI) — An index that allows mailers to compare deliverability factors among several address lists prior to purchase or lease. It identifies and scores seven factors deemed critical for optimum mail processing and delivery.

National Network Service Center (NNSC) — The USPS data processing facility in Raleigh, NC, that serves as a laboratory for the development of business subsystems and as a national support center for computer networks.

National Postal Forum — A conference of postal management, major business mailers, and suppliers of postal products and systems who discuss common problems and solutions and also changes in mailing standards and mailing technologies. It is held biannually in Washington, DC.

National Stock Number (NSN) — (See *FEDSTRIP*.)

National Test Administration Center (NTAC) — A Headquarters unit that manages USPS testing of external applicants for hire and USPS personnel for promotion. It is located in Alexandria, VA.

National Workhour Report (NWR) — A report, which is generated on a pay period and accounting period basis, that uses workhours from individual employee pay records, including adjustments, and transferred, loaned, and training hours from Form 1236-A, *Weekly Loan, Transfer & Training Hours*. The report displays data by function and labor distribution code (LDC), which includes the following: the actual hours worked compared with the operating budget plan, the year-to-date performance, and the same-period-last-year (SPLY) performance. It is produced on various levels (for example, post offices through national summaries).

National Workhour Reporting System (NWRS) — The labor expense functional reporting system that consists of the National Workhour Report and the Labor Utilization Report.

neighborhood delivery and collection box unit (NDCBU) — A centralized unit of more than eight individually locked compartments sized to accommodate the delivery of magazines, merchandise samples, and several days' accumulation of mail. In addition, collection mail may be deposited in a designated compartment. (See also *cluster box unit*.)

night differential — The 10 percent compensation added to an employee's base hourly rate for work time between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.

nixie — A mailpiece that cannot be sorted or delivered because of an incorrect, illegible, or insufficient delivery address. A nixie clerk specializes in handling this mail. (See also *undeliverable as addressed*.)

N

non-city delivery office (NCD) — A post office with no city delivery service.

nonlocal — Outgoing mail destined for a postal area outside the post office where the piece is mailed. (Also called *out of town*.)

nonmachinable — The incapacity of a mailpiece to be sorted on mail processing equipment because of size, shape, content, or address legibility. Such mail must be processed by manual distribution.

nonmachinable outside (NMO) — Generally, a parcel or mailpiece that must be processed manually because of size, weight, or another characteristic that prevents safe sorting by mechanized or automated mail processing equipment. The piece (such as a truck tire) cannot be placed inside a container that can be mailed. (See *outside parcel*.)

nonmailable articles and substances — Matter that may not, by law, be sent through the mail. This includes certain hazardous matter, restricted matter, or perishable matter. (Also called *nonmailable matter*.)

nonmailable written, printed, and graphic matter — Matter that would be otherwise mailable that includes certain solicitations, lottery and certain advertising matter, and matter using any fictitious name, title, or address in conducting any scheme or device in violation of law. The solicitations may be either in guise of bills, invoices, or statements of account, or they may deceptively imply federal connection, approval, or endorsement.

nonmail services — Postal services that do not include delivery of mailpieces (for example, providing mailing list service for a fee or selling a postal money order).

nonpersonnel unit — A small nonstaffed post office station or post office branch that is served by a rural carrier in quarters provided by a contractor, which also provides custodial and security support. This facility provides, on a self-service basis, essential customer services such as the collection and delivery of mail and the sale of postage stamps.

nonpostal stamp — A stamp that is sold by the USPS as an agent of other federal agencies (for example, the migratory-bird hunting and conservation stamp). Although U.S. Savings Stamps were once accepted as postal funds, this type of stamp is now solely redeemable by the U.S. Treasury.

Nonprofit rate — A preferred rate for a Periodicals publisher authorized as a nonprofit organization.

Nonprofit Standard Mail — A subclass of Standard Mail that is available only to qualified organizations specified by U.S. statute.

nonreadable mail — Mail whose address cannot be deciphered by an optical character reader.

nonsalable stock — Stamp stock that is damaged, detached, or obsolete, or stamp coil remnants that are insufficient for vending.

nonstandard size mail — First-Class Mail or single-piece Standard Mail (A) weighing 1 ounce or less and exceeding any of these size limits:
More than 11-1/2 inches long, or
More than 6-1/8 inches high, or
More than 1/4 inch thick, or
With a length less than 1.3 times the height, or more than 2.5 times the height.
This type of mail incurs a surcharge. (See also *aspect ratio* and *minimum size standard*.)

no office (NO) — A notation on mail schedules and in listing points traversed by highway contract routes that indicates that the point has no post office.

nutting truck — A wheeled container that is used to move or store small quantities of mail within a postal facility. The container, which consists of a platform and two slatted ends to restrain loads, can be moved by hand or by tractor. It was named for its designer, Elijah Nutting. (See also *mail transport equipment*.) (Also called *platform truck or trailer, float, or tram*.)



obliterator — A device used for cancellation that can include the validator, registry, or round-dater stamp; parcel post canceler; rubber oval stamp; and the all-purpose dating stamp.

occupant address — An alternative addressing format that uses one of four designations (that is, postal customer, occupant, householder, or resident) rather than an addressee name at a specific street address or post office box number, or rural route and box number; and post office, state, and ZIP Code. (Compare with *exceptional address* and *simplified address*.)

OCR read area — A rectangular area on the address side of the mailpiece that is 1/2 inch from the left and right edges of the mailpiece, 5/8 inch from the bottom edge, and 2-3/4 inches from the bottom edge. (See also *optical character reader*.)

officer in charge (OIC) — A career postal employee appointed temporarily to fill a postmaster vacancy, usually for no longer than 180 days.

office time — The amount of time that a letter carrier spends in the delivery unit casing mail and performing other administrative duties before leaving to deliver mail or after returning from the route.

official mail — Mail authorized by federal law to be sent by government officials without postage prepayment. It includes franked mail sent by members of Congress and penalty mail sent by U.S. Government agencies.

Official Mail Accounting System (OMAS) — An automated system that provides for data entry of official mail forms by designated postal facilities. The USPS bills federal agencies, based on data from this system, and post offices get credit for the revenue. Agencies use data from this system to control their postage costs.

official personnel folder (OPF) — A folder maintained for each USPS employee that contains documents reflecting the official status, salary, benefits, and service or work performance of the employee.

On-Line File Maintenance (OFM) — A payroll software application for updating employee master records for specific data found in source documents. Examples include address changes, allotments, and health benefits.



On-Line Query (OLQ) — A software application that accesses employee master records through video display terminals. (See *Computerized Remote Postage Meter Resetting System*.)

On-Site Meter Setting — A program under which a USPS employee sets a postage meter at a mailer's office.

on-the-clock/off-the-clock — A designation that describes the duty status of a USPS employee (that is, on duty or off duty).

opening unit — An operational area within a mail processing facility where pouches, sacks, and containers of mail are received from arriving dispatches and are opened and prepared for distribution.

open transit — Mail from one country to another, usually in small quantities, sent to the United States for processing and dispatching. (Also called *à découvert*.)

optical character reader/channel sorter (OCR/CS) — An automated mail sorting machine that locates the delivery address on the face of a mailpiece; reads and interprets the city, state, and ZIP Code; prints a barcode; and sorts the mailpiece into either 44 or 60 stackers. It consists of a mail feed and transport unit; stacker modules; and a computer with system control, video monitor, and printer. (See also *OCR read area*.) (Also called *multiline optical character reader* and *single line optical character reader*.)

optional endorsement line (OEL) — A method of identifying the sortation level of a package or bundle of mail. It replaces the use of the facing slip and pressure-sensitive adhesive package label with a series of specific printed characters on the top line of the address block.

Optional Procedure Mailing System (OP) — A method of verifying and accepting First-Class Mail and Standard Mail consisting of identical- or nonidentical-weight pieces by comparing a mailer's financial, production, and other business records instead of using standard weight verification procedures. (Compare with *Manifest Mailing System*.)

ordinary — Shortened designation for ordinary mail.



ordinary mail — Any class of domestic mail that is accorded standard dispatching and handling. This excludes Express Mail and Priority Mail as well as mail with a special service (for example, certified mail, collect on delivery, registered mail, special delivery, and special handling).

original entry — The post office where a publisher submits the application for Periodicals mailing privileges for a qualified publication. The publication may be mailed there or at another post office for which the publisher holds an additional entry authorization. (See also *exceptional dispatch*.)

original mailing office — The post office where the authorization for Nonprofit Standard Mail rates is filed.

originating mail — Outgoing mail and local mail that enter the mailstream (that is, the point of origin) for mail processing and delivery. (Compare with *destinating mail*.)

Origin Destination Information System (ODIS) — An information system by which data on mail volume, service standard analysis, and other mail characteristics are collected, developed, and reported in a variety of formats for USPS management.

origin facility — The point of entry used by mailer presenting a mailing.

other articles (AO) — A category of international mail that consists of the various classes of printed matter (i.e., regular printed matter, books and sheet music, and publishers' periodicals), matter for the blind, and small packets (e.g., lightweight merchandise shipments). The AO designation is derived from the French term *autres objets*.

outgoing mail — Mail sorted within a mail processing facility that is dispatched to another facility for additional processing or delivery. (Also called *originating mail*.) (Compare with *incoming mail*.)

outsert — Mailing industry term for an external attachment such as an invoice affixed to the outside of another mailpiece. (Also called *tip-on*.) (Compare with *insert*.)

outside — A mailpiece that cannot be placed into a sack or container because of size, weight, shape, or contents.

outside parcel — A mail processing category for a mailpiece that exceeds the dimensions for machinable parcel or a high density item (other than a book or printed matter).



overage — The dollar amount above the accountable amount shown on Form 1412-A at the conclusion of a retail vending credit examination.

overflow tray — A less-than-full tray that contains all pieces remaining after preparation of full trays for the same destination. An overflow tray may be prepared only if permitted by standard.

over-carry — Airlifted mail carried beyond the point of scheduled dispatch.

Overnighter, The — A shipping container (box, tube, or envelope) that the USPS provides at no extra cost to Express Mail customers. The Overnighter™ is a USPS trademark.

over-the-road container (OTR) — A container used within the National Bulk Mail System for transporting surface preferential mail by truck or railroad. Also, a container that moves between a bulk mail center (BMC) and its associate postal facilities as opposed to a container used exclusively in the BMC.

P

package — A group of addressed pieces assembled and secured together to make up a basic unit of bulk mail for mail processing. The term is not correctly applied when referring to unsecured groups of pieces placed in trays and identified by separator cards, although package labels and other package identification methods may be used for unsecured groups of pieces as permitted by standard.

pallet — A platform made of high-quality rigid, reusable material (wood or plastic) on which mail is stacked for four-way forklift entry (as a single unit) and used to transport mail between mailers, bulk mail centers, and postal facilities. This type of mail transport equipment must hold loads equal to a gross weight of 2,220 pounds and a volume of up to 65 cubic feet. A USPS pallet is 48 inches by 40 inches.

palletization — A process of preparing mail on a pallet under specific standards for transportation. (See also *copalletize*.)

palletize — To prepare mail on a pallet for transportation.

pane — One quarter of a full sheet of postage stamps (for example, 50 stamps of a sheet of 200). Full sheets are perforated and cut into panes before shipment to post offices. This process allows for easier distribution and sale.

paper rack — (See *sorting rack*.)

par avion — (French) International term for airmail.

parcel — Mail that does not meet the mail processing category of letter-size mail or flat-size mail. It is usually enclosed in a mailing container such as a carton. (See *irregular parcel*, *machinable parcel*, and *outside parcel*.)

parcel airlift (PAL) — A special service that provides air transportation for parcels on a space-available basis to or from military post offices outside the contiguous 48 states. (Compare with *military ordinary mail*.)

parcel locker — A unit that is installed alongside neighborhood delivery and collection box units or in conjunction with post office boxes in a retail facility that is used for parcel delivery.

Parcel Post — A subclass of Standard Mail with rates based on weight, zone, delivery within a bulk mail center or sectional center facility service area, and on additional standards.

parcel sorting machine (PSM) — A large machine with an input station controlled by a computer that sorts and discharges parcels from transport trays to primary and secondary positions.

park and loop — A delivery method in which the letter carrier parks the vehicle and walks out and back over one or more streets, delivering mail away from and looping back to the vehicle. (Also called *loop*.)

pay period — A period that comprises 2 service weeks, beginning on Saturday and ending 2 weeks later on Friday. (See also *service day* and *service week*.)

penalty mail — Official mail sent without postage prepayment by officers of the executive and judicial branches of the U.S. Government, by departments and agencies of the U.S. Government, and by specifically authorized individuals. The term comes from the endorsement “Penalty for Private Use” printed on the mail. (Compare with *franked mail*.)

periodical publication — Printed matter (a magazine, newspaper, or other publication) that is issued on a regular, stated basis.

Periodicals — A mail class (formerly called second-class mail) consisting of magazines, newspapers, or other publications formed of printed sheets that are issued at least four times a year at regular, specified intervals (frequency) from a known office of publication. Periodicals usually must have a list of subscribers and/or requesters, as appropriate.

perishable matter — An item (such as produce, live animal, or live plant) that can deteriorate in the mail and thereby lose value, create a health hazard, or cause a nuisance or disturbance under ordinary mailing conditions. Such matter usually requires special packaging. (Compare with *hazardous matter* and *restricted matter*.)

permit — Any authorization required for specific types of preparation or postage payment. Specifically, an authorization to mail without postage affixed by using indicia or an imprint. Payment is made against an advance deposit account that is established with the USPS for postage and special services.

permit imprint — Printed indicia, instead of an adhesive postage stamp or meter stamp, that shows postage prepayment by an authorized mailer. (See also *permit*.)

P

philatelic center — A retail outlet or designated location in a postal lobby that sells select stamp stock of various plate number positions and a complete line of philatelic products for stamp collectors. (Also called *Postique*, which is a USPS trademark.)

Philatelic Fulfillment Service Center — A postal unit that supplies philatelic product orders (stamps and other products) by subscription or mail/telephone order. It also handles orders for personalized imprinted stamped envelopes and applies the first-day-of-issue stamp and other special cancellations. It is located in Kansas City, MO.

philately — The collection and study of the postage stamp and postal stationery for pleasure and profit.

pickup service — A service available for a fee from designated post offices for Parcel Post (if scheduled); Priority Mail at single-piece rates; and certain types of Express Mail.

pickup table — (See *facing table*.)

pictorial cancellation — (See *hand-stamped cancellation*.)

pie cart/pie rack — (informal) (See *tray cart*.)

piece — In mail processing, either an unsacked or untrayed single addressed article of mail or a pouch or sack of mail considered as a single article. (Compare with *mailpiece*.)

piece count — A calculation of mail volume that provides the actual number of mailpieces processed. It is generated by machine meter, machine printouts, or actual counts. If these methods are not feasible, the weights, number of containers, or linear feet of mail are multiplied by a national conversion factor to determine the number of mailpieces.

piece rate — In bulk mail, the postage charged for each mailpiece in addition to the pound rate charge, if applicable, for the entire mailing. In transportation under contract, a basis of payment according to the number of pouches, sacks, or outsides. The rate may be determined by distance from origin to destination or by an amount per piece.

pigeonhole — One opening or section for sorting mail into a distribution case.

piggyback — To move a single tractor-trailer onto a special rail flatcar. (Also called *trailer-on-flatcar service*.)

plant loading/plant load operation — An operation in which the USPS provides mail transportation for bulk mail from the mailer to a downstream facility, bypassing the local post office. (See also *facility bypass*.)

plant-verified drop shipment (PVDS) — A procedure that enables origin verification and postage payment for shipments transported by the mailer from the mailer's plant to destination post offices for USPS acceptance as mail. It is typically used for mailings for which a destination entry discount is claimed.

plate block — The block rows of postage stamps, two rows wide, in a pane next to the selvage that contains the number(s) of the plate(s) used to print the stamps. Generally a block of four stamps, it may be larger if the pane of stamps includes more than four designs.

platform acceptance unit (PAU) — (See *business mail entry unit*.)

platform truck or trailer — (See *nutting truck*.)

pocket — (See *bin*.)

Point of Sale System (POS) — The electronic system used at retail facilities to record sales and payment transactions.

pool case shipment — Standard Mail (B) that is postage paid, addressed (with ZIP Code), destined for a sectional center facility, and packed in containers that can be moved with lift trucks or similar mail handling equipment.

point of purchase promotions (POP) — Elements of promotional campaigns for products and services sold at retail that are prominently and timely displayed in lobby and counter areas.

portable post office boxes — Post office boxes secured in a frame for central point delivery in business buildings.

POS ONE — New point-of-service system that will replace the 63,200 aging and obsolete integrated retail terminals (IRTs) with state-of-the-art Pentium processors. It is not a stand alone system; it will be the source of retail marketing, financial, and operations information used throughout the Postal Service. It will also be a primary tool for delivering USPS product and service information to customers.



POS ONE controller/terminal — This system is installed at all POS ONE sites not qualifying for AOI. The controller/terminal will be externally identical to the regular POS ONE terminal and will perform all POS ONE functions, but in addition will house the centralized POS ONE files and perform the other POS-related functions of the AOI server. All POS ONE terminals will be connected to the POS ONE controller/terminal, but non-POS ONE terminals will be connected to the controller/terminal.

POS ONE unit — Based on Intel PC architecture and will be configured with hardware components including the following: modular scale, customer and clerk displays, integral debit/credit authorization, signature capture, slip printer for imprinting money orders, MICR reader for checks, and a barcode scanner.

postage — Payment for delivery service that is affixed or imprinted to a mailpiece usually in the form of a postage stamp, permit imprint, or meter impression.

Postage and Mailing Center (PMC) — Self-service equipment that allows a customer to weigh, rate, and buy postage in the form of a single stamp. The stamp is nondenominational until the time of purchase. Some machines also offer electronic change of address.

postage due mail — Mail on which additional postage is collectable on final delivery. (Also called *shortpaid mail*.)

postage meter — A mechanical or electromechanical device that can print one or more denominations of an authorized postage indicia. It is available for lease only from designated manufacturers. (See also *metered mail*.)

postage stamp — A gummed or self-adhesive paper stamp affixed to mail as payment for postal services. Types of stamps include definitive stamp (regular-issue stamp), special-issue stamp, and commemorative stamp. (Compare with *metered postage*.)

postage statement — Documentation provided by a mailer to the USPS that reports the volume of mail being presented and the postage payable or affixed, and certifies that the mail meets the applicable eligibility standards for the rate claimed. (Formerly called *mailing statement*.)

postage validation imprinter (PVI) — A computerized printing device that attaches to an integrated retail terminal to produce a postage label similar to a meter stamp strip. This label may contain a barcoded destination ZIP Code that is compatible with automated mail processing equipment.

Postal Answer Line (PAL) — An automated telephone service that provides recorded messages about rates and mail classes, international mail, special services, business mail, retail hours and locations, mail fraud and security, and other general postal topics.

postal area ZIP Code — All ZIP Code assignments other than unique ZIP Codes. This category includes ZIP Codes assigned to postal facilities, post office box sections, caller service, vertical improved mail units in buildings, and delivery units. ZIP Code is a USPS trademark.

Postal Bulletin — A biweekly USPS publication that announces instructions and changes in policy and standards. It has been issued by Headquarters since 1880 and sent to all postal units; it is also available to public subscribers. The notices are in force for 1 year unless they revise permanent standards or specify a different time frame.

postal business center (PBC) — A USPS unit that helps the small- and medium-volume mailer learn about postal products and services.

postal card — A blank mailing card sold by the USPS (as distinguished from a commercial postcard) with a printed or impressed postage stamp.

Postal Career Executive Service (PCES) — A staffing category that develops and maintains a group of employees for key management positions. There are two levels in PCES: Level I includes district, area, and Headquarters executives, and Level II consists of USPS officers, including vice presidents.

postal center — A free-standing enclosed unit that contains post office box modules (100 to 300 boxes). The center has a collection receptacle and a stamp vending machine, and it may have parcel lockers.

postal code — A delivery code used by a foreign country (as compared with ZIP Code used in the United States).

P

postal commodity machine (PCM)— Equipment that dispenses postage stamps, retail products, and stamped envelopes. This type of retail equipment is used in post office lobbies, shopping malls, and other self-service vending locations. (See also *self-service postal center*.)

Postal Computing Environment (PCE) — Includes applications and data, information technology services, and information technology infrastructure. It includes technical information, design rules, configuration details, and procedures appropriate to guide the transition from centralized to distributed computing. It contains rules and procedures that are intended to improve postal computing in a distributed processing environment. In its entirety, it provides a framework for designing business applications and building IT infrastructure.

Postal Customer Council Program (PCC) — A national program that provides mailers with a forum for exchanging ideas for improved mail service and discussing new and existing USPS products, programs, regulations, and procedures. (Formerly known as *mail users councils*.)

postal data center (PDC) — (obsolete) (See *information systems service center*.)

postal/distribution/retail clerk — A USPS employee who separates incoming mail and outgoing mail according to established schemes, or serves the public at a postal retail location.

postal employee development center (PEDC) — Field units located in specific postal facilities that provide areawide training and development support services for all USPS personnel on a continuing basis. They are equipped with self-instructional material and audiovisual equipment for scheme training and other professional development.

Postal Forum — (See *National Postal Forum*.)

postal funds — All monies received or controlled by USPS personnel (including contractors who handle these funds) in any manner while performing their duties.

postal money order — A nonmail service provided for a fee for transmitting money. Domestic money orders are sold and redeemed at all post offices, and international money orders are issued to addresses in those countries whose postal administrations have agreements with the USPS.

POSTal Numeric Encoding Technique (POSTNET) — The barcode system used by the USPS for translating ZIP Code, ZIP+4 code, and delivery point code information into a machine-readable format that consists of a series of vertical full and half bars. (See also *delivery point barcode* and *ZIP+4 barcode*.)

Postal Operations Manual (POM) — This directive details the internal operations of post offices, including retail and customer service; collection and delivery service; mail processing and transportation; fleet management; and special services and supplemental mail services. It is one of six USPS policy manuals.

Postal Rate Commission (PRC) — An independent federal agency that makes recommendations on USPS requests for changes in postal rates and mail classifications. The five commissioners are nominated by the President and approved by the U.S. Senate.

Postal Reorganization Act — The statute that requires postal rates and fees to “provide sufficient revenues so that the total estimated income and appropriations . . . will equal as nearly as practicable total estimated costs.” (Public Law 91-375, signed August 12, 1970.)

postal routed network (PRN) — The internal postal network that enables electronic transmission of data within the Postal Service.

Postal Service Manual — (obsolete) The manual containing all USPS regulations that was reorganized and republished as six subject-based policy manuals.

Postal Service schedule (PS) — The wage structure that applies to USPS craft employees.

Postal Service Training and Development Institute (PST&DI) — (See *Management Academy*.) (Formerly known as *postal training center*.)

Postal Source Data System (PSDS) — An electronic data processing network that gathers operational and administrative data (such as mail volume and labor hours) from large post offices. It gathers the data with little or no manual intervention, processes it at a central site data center, and then disseminates information.

postal stationery — Postal cards, aerogrammes, and stamped envelopes. (Formerly called *stamped paper*.)



Postal Union Mail — Mail that is governed by the regulations of the Convention of the Universal Postal Union. It includes lettres et cartes (LC) and autres objets (AO). (See also *colis postaux* and *Express Mail International Service*.)

postal vehicle service (PVS) — A service operated by employees of the local post office to transport mail between post office branches, post office stations, and terminals.

postal zone — A geographic measurement that is based on the distance between units of the earth's area 30 minutes square. This data is generally used when computing postage on zone-rate mail (such as Parcel Post) between USPS facilities including military post offices. (See also *zone*.)

postcard — A privately printed mailing card. (Compare with *postal card*.)

poste restante (PR) — (French) International mail sent to general delivery.

Postique™ — A USPS trademark. (See *philatelic center*.)

postmark — A postal cancellation imprint on letters flats and parcels. The imprint shows date and the name, state, and ZIP Code of the post office or sectional center facility that accepted custody of the mailpiece. (See also *backstamp*.)

postmarking stamp — A handstamp used to cancel postage on mail and for imprinting (in black ink) the date and city, state, and ZIP Code. (See also *facer-canceler*.) (Compare with *all-purpose dating stamp*.)

postmaster — The manager in charge of a post office. (Compare with *officer in charge*.)

postmaster general (PMG) — The chief executive officer of the USPS who is named by and serves at the pleasure of the Board of Governors. As a member of the Board, this officer appoints the deputy postmaster general jointly with the Board.

POSTNET — (See *POSTal Numeric Encoding Technique*.)

post office (PO) — The basic organizational unit of the USPS. Generally, each post office has primary responsibility for collection, delivery, and retail operations in a specific geographic area. Each year, these units are categorized by revenue and mail volume.

post office box — A locked box, located in the post office lobby or other authorized place, that customers may rent for delivery of their mail. (Formerly called *lock box*.)

post office box service — A premium service (or alternate delivery) that consists of delivery to post office boxes rented to customers for a fee (as opposed to general delivery or firm holdout service, which is provided at no charge). (Compare with *caller service*.)

post office branch — A unit of a main post office that is outside the corporate limits of the city or town of the main post office. (Compare with *post office station*.) (Also called *classified branch*.)

Post Office Scheduler (POSKED) — A computer program that simulates staffing schedules according to mail availability and operating variables. The program derives base staffing level and reporting schedules to evaluate the result of process changes.

post office station — A unit of a main post office that is within the corporate limits of the city or town of the main post office. (Compare with *post office branch*.)

pouch — A container identified by its leather neck strap with a closing latch and eye near the opening (unlike a sack, which is tied). It is generally used for First-Class Mail and registered mail; a special blue and orange pouch is used for Express Mail. Also, the term is used to indicate one unit making up a direct pouch labeled to another unit. In mail processing and dispatch functions, to place mailpieces in pouches. (See also *mail transport equipment*.) (Also called *mailpouch*.)

pouch-on — To prepare a pouch of First-Class Mail for another post office.

pouch rack — (See *sorting rack*.)

practice card — A piece of stiff paper or cardboard that contains a dummy scheme item, with the delivery address on one side and the route number of the letter carrier on the bottom.

precancel — To cancel postage stamps, stamped envelopes, or postal cards before mailing. The USPS sells precanceled postage to mailers of bulk mail (Standard Mail (A)) or discount-rated First-Class Mail; if authorized, bulk mailers may precancel postage.



precanceled stamp — A postage stamp canceled by an imprint across the face before it is sold to mailers for bulk mail. Also, a stamp designated by the USPS as a precanceled stamp without cancellation marks. Mailpieces with these stamps do not go through a canceling machine at the time of mail processing. (See also *precancel*.)

preferential mail — Mail that receives preferential handling. This includes Express Mail, international airmail, First-Class Mail, Priority Mail, Periodicals, special delivery, and special handling. (Also called *hot mail*.)

preferred rate — A postage rate maintained, through congressional appropriations, at a level lower than the regular rate for the same mail class or service. These rates are available only to qualified organizations and individuals (for example, free matter for the blind and other handicapped persons). (Also called *nonprofit rate* and *special rate*.)

presort — To sort mail in a mailing according to USPS standards before presenting the mailing at a post office. The sortation is usually by ZIP Code or a carrier route. All automation rate mail is presorted by the mailer.

Presort Accuracy Validation and Evaluation (PAVE) — A voluntary program in which the USPS provides testing for certain categories of presort software to determine compliance of sorting address information to USPS standards and the ability to produce standardized documentation.

Presorted First-Class Mailing — A nonautomation rate category for a mailing that consists of at least 500 addressed mailpieces and is sorted and prepared according to USPS standards. This mail does not bear a barcode.

presorted mail — A form of mail preparation, required to bypass certain postal operations, in which the mailer groups pieces in a mailing by ZIP Code or by carrier route or carrier walk sequence (or other USPS-recommended separation).

primary — The first sorting operation for outgoing mail or incoming mail. (Compare with *secondary* and *tertiary*.)

primary case — A case used for the initial or primary sorting of letter-size mail.

printed matter — Paper on which words, letters, characters, figures, or images (or any combination of them) not having the character of a bill or statement of account, or of actual or personal correspondence, have been reproduced by any process other than handwriting or typewriting. In international mail, this is a classification that includes books and sheet music, publishers' periodicals, and regular printed matter (all printed matter other than the aforementioned types). (Compare with *Bound Printed Matter*.)

Priority Mail™ — A subclass of First-Class Mail that weighs more than 11 ounces and usually consists of flats and parcels. It provides faster delivery than Parcel Post. At the mailer's option, mail weighing 11 ounces or less may be sent at the Priority Mail rates. Any mailable matter may be sent as Priority Mail. Priority Mail is a USPS trademark. (See also *International Priority Airmail*.)

Private Express Statutes — U.S. laws that give the USPS exclusive right, with specific exceptions, to carry letters for compensation. Regulations under these statutes are published in title 39 of the Code of Federal Regulations parts 310 and 320, as amended by final rules published in the Federal Register. (See also *alternative delivery*.)

probationary period — The initial trial period of employment for career USPS employees. For bargaining unit employees, the probationary period is the first 90 calendar days; for nonbargaining unit employees, the period is the first 6 months. During this period, access to the grievance or adverse action appeal systems is not granted.

process expert — Supplies information to the postal reengineering project core team that is useful in the analysis of the subject reengineering. Process experts can be process stakeholders, survey teams, line and staff workers and supervisors, and process managers.

processing and distribution center/facility (PDC/F) — A central mail facility that processes and dispatches part or all of both incoming mail and outgoing mail for a designated service area. It also provides instructions on the preparation of collection mail, dispatch schedules, and sorting plan requirements to mailers. The facility is usually a sectional center facility or a general mail facility, but it can also be a dedicated mail processing facility without a post office station, or post office branch. (Formerly known as an *area mail processing center*.)

processing category — (See *mail processing category*.)

P

procurement service office (PSO) — (obsolete) (See *purchasing and materials service center*.)

Productivity Information Reporting System (PIRS) — A computer program used by the bulk mail centers that tracks workload, workhours, and productivity.

Program for Alcoholic Recovery (PAR) — (obsolete) (See *Employee Assistance Program*.)

prohibited matter — Any material that is illegal to mail because it can kill or injure an individual or damage other mail. This includes certain poisons and controlled substances and certain flammable or hazardous matter. (Also called *nonmailable dangerous goods*.)

prohibitory order — A USPS order requested by the addressee of a pandering advertisement that directs the sender to make no further mailing to that addressee.

project manager (PM) — For each postal reengineering project core team there is a project manager (PM). The PM is selected by the executive sponsor to administer the activities of the reengineering. The PM will be the day-to-day postal resource placed full time on the team, bridging the gap from the team to the executive sponsor.

public service appropriations — Formerly, the annual appropriations by Congress for public service costs incurred in providing nationwide postal service. This subsidy was ended in fiscal year 1983. (See *revenue forgone appropriations*.)

publication watch — A method of determining the reason for delayed delivery or nondelivery of periodicals, newspapers, and other subscription materials. The addressee completes Form 3721, *Publication Watch*, to verify originating and destinating information.

Public Web — The Web site containing postal information accessible by anyone, postal or public (<http://www.usps.gov>).

publishers' periodicals — Publications that qualify as domestic Periodicals rate publications and are mailed to a foreign address. It is one of three classifications for international printed matter.

pull — To remove sorted mail from distribution cases and other containers for transport to the next point of handling. (Also called *sweep*.)



pull racks — To take mailbags from the sorting rack for dispatch. Also, to close and lock all sacks and pouches containing mail on sorting racks, usually at the end of each trip or working tour. (Also called *skin the rack*.)

purchasing and materials service center (PMSC) — A center reporting to headquarters that manages purchasing and supply activities for an area through subordinate offices. (Formerly called *procurement service office*.)

Q

qualifying piece — A mailpiece that meets all standards for a certain rate or discount. (Compare with *residual mail*.)

quality assurance (QA) — A purchasing function that determines contractual compliance of items and services. This is done through inspections, tests, surveys, and audits of contractors' production and quality control systems. (See also *contracting officer representative*.)

quality control (QC) — The control of various mail processing factors to produce consistent, uniform distribution, conforming to specified standards.

Quality Step Increase (QSI) — A step increase within a salary grade granted to a USPS employee before expiration of required waiting periods. It is awarded in recognition of outstanding performance.

rack — (See *sorting rack*.)

rates and classification service center (RCSC) — A field office of headquarters that provides guidance to field personnel and customers on mail classification, postage rates, mail preparation standards, and postage payment programs.

rate setting — The process by which postage rates and fees are changed under the joint responsibility of the USPS and the Postal Rate Commission (PRC). USPS managers recommend proposed rates for all mail classes to the Board of Governors; with the approval of the Board, the proposed rates are sent to the PRC, which holds public hearings and recommends rates. If the Board finds these rates unsatisfactory, it may modify them by unanimous vote. (See also *Domestic Mail Classification Schedule*.)

readable — Capability of material (for example, the ZIP Code and address on letter-size mail) to be read by an optical character reader.

read reject — In the optical character reader system, a mailpiece for which the ZIP Code cannot be determined. In a barcode sorter, a mailpiece for which the barcode cannot be determined. (Compare with *mechanical rejects*.)

rebuts — (French) Undeliverable or refused international mail being returned to sender.

recall mail — Mail that is withdrawn from the mailstream and returned to the sender or designated representative at the sender's request.

recorded delivery — An international special service available to some countries that is similar to domestic certified mail.

red — (informal) A piece of registered mail. The term originated when registered mail was dispatched in red-striped pouches.

redesign — The transformation of a business process to achieve significant levels of improvement in one or more performance measures relating to fitness for purpose, quality, cycle time, and cost by using the techniques of streamlining and removing non-value added activities and costs. Redesign projects typically take about 6 months to complete.

red run — An assignment to handle registered mail.

R

reengineering — The radical transformation of a postal business process to achieve orders of magnitude improvement in one or more performance measures relating to fitness-for-purpose, quality, cycle time, and cost; usually requiring the application of technology enablers. Reengineering projects typically take a minimum of 2 years to complete.

reference scheme — (See *scheme*.)

refused mail — Mail that is not accepted by the addressee and is returned to the sender.

registered mail — A special service by which, through a system of receipts, the USPS monitors the movement of the mailpiece from the point of acceptance by the USPS to delivery. The sender receives a receipt at the time of mailing, and a delivery record is kept at the post office of address. This service also provides optional indemnity in case of loss or damage. It is the most secure service offered by the USPS. (See also *letter jacket* and *manifold book*.) (Compare with *certified mail* and *insured mail*.)

register of eligibles — A list of applicants for vacancies in an installation. The list is usually arranged by descending test scores.

regular-issue stamp — (See *definitive stamp*.)

regular stamp window — A clerk station in a post office that accepts mail, offers a variety of services (postal money order, meter setting, etc.), and sells postage stamps and postal stationery.

relay — Mail that a city letter carrier prepares in sacks for delivery to relay drop boxes along the line of travel of a route. After completing delivery of carry-out mail, the letter carrier picks up additional mail from the relay drop box and resumes delivery, continuing this process until the entire route is served. A relay may weigh up to 35 pounds. (See also *drop box*.)

relay drop box — (See *drop box*.)

relay route — In city delivery service, a route in which the city carrier places sacks of mail in drop boxes for pick up by city carriers as they deliver mail on their routes.

remote encoding center — A USPS unit that uses advanced technology to assign barcodes to hand-addressed mailpieces physically located at a general mail facility. After the mailpiece image is displayed on a computer terminal, an operator, who is at the center, keys in the ZIP Code and the street address in order to match this information with that in a database. This allows for the imprinting of the barcode and automated mail processing at the general mail facility.

removal — (See *forward*.)

requester publication — A Periodicals publication of which 50 percent or more of its distribution is to persons who have requested the publication. This type of publication is ineligible for any preferred rate.

residential route — A city delivery route on which at least 70 percent of the deliveries are to residences. (Compare with *business route*.)

residual mail — Matter remaining after completion of a presort sequence. It lacks the volume set by standard to require or permit package, tray, or sack preparation to a particular destination. Residual mail usually does not qualify for the presort rate. (Also called *nonqualifying mail* and *working mail*.)

residue — Mail for small post offices that have no direct separation space in a case or rack.

residue case — A case for distributing mail destined for post offices that do not have separations on primary or secondary distribution cases.

rest bar — (informal) (See *adjustable platform stool*.)

restricted delivery — A supplemental mail service that generally limits who may receive an item. This service is available for a fee when used with certified mail, collect on delivery, insured mail, and registered mail. (See also *special service*.)

R

restricted matter — Any item on which certain mailing restrictions have been imposed for legal reasons other than risk of harm to persons or property involved in moving the mail and that require specific endorsements and markings. Examples include intoxicating liquors, abortive or contraceptive devices, odd-shaped items in envelopes, motor vehicle master keys, locksmithing devices as well as odor-producing materials, certain liquids and powders, and battery-powered devices. (Compare with *hazardous matter* and *perishable matter*.)

Retail Analysis Program (RAP) — A program to monitor customer traffic, transactions, and other retail operations. Information from program surveys aids management decisions in areas such as staffing, workload, facility location, and service requirements.

retail facility — A postal unit (a post office and its subordinate units as well as military post offices) that sells postage stamps and provides other postal retail services to customers. The subordinate units are within the service area of a main post office and include post office stations, post office branches, contract postal units, and nonpersonnel units.

retail site verification program (RSVP) — A data base that provides up-to-date information about facility and revenue performance at retail units operated by the Postal Service. The RSVP system is designed to support retail functions for USPS Headquarters, area offices, and district offices.

retrace — The part of a rural route traversed twice by the rural carrier. To travel past the part of the route already served.

return address — A mailpiece element that is usually placed in the upper left corner of the mailpiece to indicate the address of the sender. This address indicates where the sender wants the mail returned if it is undeliverable and where the sender will pay any fee due for that mail. (See also *undeliverable as addressed*.)

return mail — Mail that must be sent in the opposite direction for proper dispatch. (Also called *turnback mail*.)

return receipt — The mailing card (Form 3811 for domestic and Form 2865 for international) signed by the addressee of an article and mailed back to the sender as evidence of delivery. This supplemental mail service is available for a fee when using Express Mail or recorded delivery, certified mail, collect on delivery, mail insured for more than \$50, registered mail, or return receipt for merchandise.

return receipt for merchandise — A special service that provides the sender with a mailing receipt and a return receipt. A delivery record is kept at the office of address. It does not include insurance coverage and does not provide for restricted delivery.

revenue assurance — An ongoing policy to prevent the loss of revenue by identifying uncanceled postage stamps, and misclassified mail and collecting postage and fees for unpaid or shortpaid mail. (See also *cancel*.)

Revenue/Cost Analysis System — A group of methods used to collect and develop revenue, volume, and cost data by mail class and special service, as required by postal management.

revenue forgone appropriations — Congressionally authorized reimbursements to the USPS for revenue that was not received because of phased or lower rates mandated by Congress for certain mail categories such as free matter for the blind. (See also *public service appropriations*.)

Revenue, Pieces, and Weight (RPW) — A postal information system that uses samples of the mailstream to measure statistically its contents in terms of volume, work content, and revenue.

revenue unit — The average amount of revenue per fiscal year from postal rates and also fees for 1,000 pieces of originating mail and special service transactions. The number of revenue units is used to categorize post offices by size. (See also *cost ascertainment grouping*.)

rewrap area — The area in which soiled or damaged mail is repaired and endorsed to show that it was damaged during processing.

rif — Mail that is easy to riffle.

R

riffle — Mail prepared so that 10 or more contiguous mailpieces are addressed to the same ZIP Code destination. Also, to check that mail is in ZIP Code sequence by thumbing quickly through the top of a tray of mail or along the side of a bundle of mail.

roll — Mail in a tube or cylinder that is limited in size by USPS standards. (See also *irregular parcels and pieces*.)

roller-canceler — A canceling device for Periodicals and Standard Mail. (See also *facer-canceler*.)

roller table — A table with a surface made up of rollers to facilitate manual mail sorting and separation of the mail into a container.

rotary lock — A special lock for pouches of registered mail. The lock is cylindrical and made of brass. The words “Registered U.S. Mail” are engraved on the front of the lock, and the back is engraved with the accountable serial number. A counter in the lock rotates to the next higher number with each turn of the key.

rotary sorting rack — A mechanical circular rack in a bulk mail center. It rotates to a predetermined scheme and positions the correct mailbag or sack near the operator for minimum movement and maximum accuracy. (See also *circular sorting rack* and *sorting rack*.) (Also called *rotary sack rack*.)

round-dater stamp — (See *all-purpose dating stamp*.)

route — A scheduled course to be followed by a USPS employee or carrier (a contractor) in performing transportation or delivery duties. To designate the time, schedule, mode of transportation (such as air, highway, or rail), and the line of travel to be used in dispatching mail from a postal unit or transportation terminal. (See also *distribution networks office*.)

route-sequenced mail — (See *carrier route presort mail*.)

routing slip — (See *buck slip*.)

run — The scheduled line of travel and operation of a mail transportation vehicle.

Rural Adjustment Processing System (RAPS) — A payroll software application used to make adjustments for rural employees based on data on Form 2240-R, *Rural Pay or Leave Adjustment Request*. (Compare with *Adjustment Processing System*.)

rural carrier — In rural communities lacking convenient postal facilities, a USPS employee assigned to deliver and collect all mail classes, thus providing most services available at a small post office.

rural carrier associate (RCA) — A noncareer USPS employee who either serves as a leave replacement in the absence of a regular rural carrier or provides service on auxiliary routes. This employee is selected from a register of eligibles, and after 1 year of service, has bidding rights to USPS career vacancies as they occur.

rural delivery service — The nationwide network of rural routes operated primarily to deliver and collect mail from roadside mailboxes owned and maintained by residents of communities without convenient postal facilities. (Formerly called *rural free delivery*.)

rural mailbox — A mailbox primarily on a rural route used for the delivery of customer mail from a vehicle. It is also used on curbside delivery routes.

rural route (RR) — A delivery route served by a rural carrier.

Rural Time and Attendance System (RTAPS) — A payroll software application that provides on-line entry of certificate data for rural carriers from Forms 1314, *Regular Rural Carrier Time Certificate*, and 1314-A, *Auxiliary Rural Carrier Time Certificate*.

S

sack — A container generally used to transport flat-size mail, parcels, and loose pack mail. It is made of sewn fabric (usually nylon, polyester, canvas, or plastic with an opening at one end) and is closed with a draw cord and fastener. In mail processing or dispatch functions, to place mail in a sack. (Compare with *pouch*.)

sack and parcel sorting machine — An overhead trolley system for hanging or placing on bucket carriers sacks to be transported for processing or dispatching at specific areas within a facility. (Compare with *sack sorting machine*.)

sack rack — (See *sorting rack*.)

sack routing system — The sorting of parcels into numbered sacks corresponding to route or geographical areas.

sack sorting and dispatch system — A large overhead trolley system with suspended trays. The system has data entry stations at central, remote in-house, and platform locations. It has discharge elements for in-house rework of sorted mail, dispatch sequencing, and direct deposit into trucks or rail cars.

sack sorting machine (SSM) — A mechanized, operator-controlled machine similar to a parcel sorting machine but of heavier construction. It separates 1,875 sacks per hour by ZIP Code to about 30 runouts. (Compare with *sack and parcel sorting machine*.)

sacs vides (SV) — (French) Empty foreign mail equipment, literally “empty sacks.”

Sales/Service Information System (S/SIS) — A computerized sales tool that helps account representatives and their sales managers to carry out their day-to-day marketing activities.

same period last year (SPLY) — The accounting period (or other period) compared with the same period the previous year.

saratoga — A deep canvas and leather satchel used for mail collection.

satchel — A canvas bag, with a large flap and shoulder strap, used by a city carrier to hold mail for delivery on a route. It is not used on a completely motorized route or mounted route.

satchel cart — A small, portable handcart used by city carriers to transport satchels of mail on their routes.

sawtooth platform — A platform for sorting sacks, surrounded by nutting trucks arranged in a sawtooth pattern for easy loading.

Schedules and Schemes Information System (SSIS) — A database of the Manpower Scheduling and Staffing Program. It collects data on work schedules and scheme knowledge of an office's employees.

scheme — A systematic plan for the distribution of mail by its destination as determined by mail processing operations. Each scheme is made up of more than 99 but fewer than 1,000 such items. Schemes are made up of address items; each item contains a single set of addresses and routing information. For example, Adair St., along its length, is divided into five scheme items, as follows:

Adair St.	Route
100–299	02
300–699	04
700–1099	06
1100–1499	08
1500–out	10

Some employees are required to memorize one or two schemes. The officially published list of all elements of address and their distribution for a specific operation is called a reference scheme. (See also *carrier route scheme* and *sort scheme*.)

scheme distribution — A systematic plan to move all mail classes from the originating office to the destinating office. It includes state schemes and city schemes.

scheme knowledge — The knowledge demonstrated by a letter carrier or distribution clerk concerning which address belongs to a specific carrier route in a specific ZIP Code area. (See also *scheme*.)

science-of-agriculture rate — A special rate for Periodicals mailed by an authorized publisher of agrarian subjects. At least 70 percent of the copies must be provided to rural residents.

screenline — A partition that separates the public lobby from the post office workroom. Also, the recessed installation of equipment into a wall.

S

secondary — A second mail sorting operation that separates mail into finer levels. (Compare with *primary* and *tertiary*.)

secondary case — A case used for making separations that cannot be included in the primary case, such as second handling pieces.

second-class mail — (obsolete) (See *Periodicals*.)

sectional center facility (SCF) — A postal facility that serves as the distribution and processing center for post offices in a designated geographic area, which is defined by the first three digits of the ZIP Code of those offices. This facility may serve more than one 3-digit ZIP Code range.

sector — The sixth and seventh digits of a ZIP+4 code. It is a geographic portion of a ZIP Code area or a rural route, several city blocks or a large building, part of a post office box section, or an official designation.

segment — The eighth and ninth digits of a ZIP+4 code. It is a specific block face, apartment house bank of boxes, a firm, a floor in a large building, or other specific location.

selects — (informal) (See *hards*.)

self-adhesive — Type of postage that does not require moisture for the adhesive to perform. Stamps are peeled from a backer or liner, and they may be applied directly to mail.

self-service postal center (SSPC) — An unstaffed postal unit that uses vending machines to provide postage stamps and other retail products and services. (See also *postal commodity machine* and *stamp vending machine*.)

selvage — The nonpostage strip or strips on the edge of a pane of postage stamps that show the plate number(s), notice of copyright, and other markings or inscriptions. (Compare with *plate block*.)

separation — A compartment in mail processing equipment used to hold separated mail. Also, a division (or segmentation) of sorted mail, after distribution, according to a scheme (for example, ZIP Code, city, or house number ranges). (See also *sort*.)

sequence — To place mail in the order of its delivery. Mailers generally receive certain discounts based on the type of sequencing. (See also *delivery sequenced mail* and *carrier route presort mail*.)

sequence loading — The placement onto a vehicle of mail in the reverse order that it is to be unloaded at its destination.

service day — An employee's scheduled work day, which is set on a calendar day (from 12:01 a.m. to 12 midnight).

service standards — A stated goal for service achievement for each mail class.

service week — An employee's scheduled work week, which is set on a calendar week (from Saturday at 12:01 a.m. to the following Friday at 12 midnight).

serving post office (SPO) — A postal facility at which Western Union Mailgram messages are received in electronic form, printed, and sealed in envelopes for delivery.

se tenant — (French) Two or more postage stamps designed for continuity of format and printed in the same pane. The stamps can form a single design; otherwise, they can be arranged in pairs, groups of four, or larger configurations.

set up — To face mailpieces in the same direction on the worktable to ease sorting into sacks and pouches.

7:01 rule — The rule that applies to city carriers who have been officially excused from the completion of the 8-hour tour. Although the carrier actually works more than 7 hours but less than 8 hours of a regular scheduled day, for pay purposes, he or she is credited with 8 hours of work time.

shake out — To empty mail from sacks and pouches.

shared mail — A number of separate circulars that are combined into a single mailpiece and mailed for several different individuals or organizations.

sheet — A complete, unseparated group of postage stamps as printed on a press. The sheet is usually perforated and cut into four or more panes for eventual sale.

S

shift — (See *tour of duty*.)

shortage — The dollar amount below the accountable amount shown on Form 1412-A at the conclusion of a retail vending credit examination.

Short-Interval Scheduler (SIS) — A computer program used to forecast mail volume. It helps supervisors make same-day operating decisions.

shortpaid mail — (See *postage due mail*.)

shrinkwrap — A plastic covering that is placed around mail and packages of stamps and then heat-sealed to enclose it tightly. Also, to cover mail with such material.

shuttle service — The scheduled transportation of mail between given points.

sidewalk delivery — A method of city delivery in which the letter carrier delivers to mailboxes posted at the edge of the sidewalk near the residence. (Compare with *central point delivery* and *curbside delivery*.)

simplified address — An alternative addressing format used when delivery of identical mail is requested to every customer on a rural route or highway contract route, or to all post office box customers at a post office without city carrier service. Instead of listing the name and address of the addressee, the mailer may use “postal customer.” It may also be used by government agencies for official mail sent to all stops on city routes and post office boxes at post offices with city delivery service. In such cases, these formats may be used: “Postal Customer,” “Residential Customer,” and “Business Customer,” depending on the type of coverage requested. (Compare with *exceptional address* and *occupant address*.)

single line queue — A queuing system to reduce customer waiting time in a postal lobby, using signs with movable stanchions connected by ropes. Customers line up single-file for the next available clerk at a retail window.

single-piece rate — A postage rate available for individual pieces of Express Mail, First-Class Mail, Priority Mail, Standard Mail (A) and Standard Mail (B). It is not available for Periodicals except under the rate category of basic. This type of rate contrasts with rates available for bulk mail and presorted mail.

single point delivery — A residential service that provides delivery to a single address (as compared with multiple addresses) at one delivery stop. (Compare with *central point delivery*.)

single-position letter sorting machine (SPLSM) — A letter sorting machine with 96 separations that has one operator and a processing capability of 3,600 faced pieces per hour.

skew — The misalignment (or slant) of a bar (in a barcode), complete barcode, character, or line of characters with respect to the bottom or top edge of the mailpiece.

skid — (See *pallet*.)

skin sack — (informal) A sack or pouch containing a small amount of mail.

skin the rack — (informal) (See *pull racks*.)

skip — (informal) A mailpiece that has passed through a canceling machine without a cancellation being applied to the postage stamp.

sleep — (informal) A letter that is lodged in the back of a case instead of lying flat in the pigeonhole or bin.

sleeve — A paperboard jacket that fits over the four sides (top, bottom, and two parallel sides) of a letter tray in order to keep the mail inside the tray from falling out.

slug — (informal) First-Class Mail or Standard Mail (A) that is too thick to be distributed into a case. Such a mailpiece must be manually culled in the facing and canceling operation. (See also *bulkie*.)

small packet — A class of international mail that can be used to send disks and tapes, computer materials, commercial samples, other lightweight merchandise items, or business documents that do *not* have the character of personal correspondence. For postage payment purposes, it is part of the other articles (ao) rate category. The weight limit for small packets is 4 pounds to all destination countries, except for Italy, which has a 2-pound limit, and Burma (Myanmar) and Papua New Guinea, which have a 1-pound limit.

small parcel and bundle sorter (SPBS) — A modular machine that sorts small parcels and packages or bundles of letters and flats to 100 specific bins for either delivery or processing.

small parcels and rolls (SPR) — (obsolete) (See *irregular parcels and pieces*.)

S

smiles, frowns, and upside downs — (informal) The accidental deviations from the uniform alignment of envelopes on a facer-canceler or letter sorting machine. When the back of the envelope faces the machine or operator, it is either a smile (flap makes a V) or a frown (flap is inverted); when the address side faces the machine but is inverted, the envelope is called an upside down.

snorkel collection box — A USPS collection box that is placed at the curbside, fitted with a chute to receive mail deposited by motorists. (Also called *courtesy box* and *motorist mailchute*.)

sort — To separate mail by a scheme or ZIP Code range; to separate and place mail into a carrier case; to distribute mail by piece, package, bundle, sack, or pouch. (See also *primary*, *secondary*, and *tertiary*.)

sortation — The distribution or separation of mail to route it to its final delivery point. (See also *mail processing*.)

sorting conveyor — (See *conveyor* and *sort*.)

sorting rack — A metal framework with hooks from which sacks or pouches hang while being filled with mail. A sorting rack can hold five to ten sacks. (See also *circular sorting rack* and *rotary sorting rack*.) (Also called *bag*, *pouch*, *sack*, *paper*, and *parcel rack*.)

sort plan — (See *scheme*.)

sort scheme — A computer program that provides automated equipment with sorting instructions. (See also *scheme*.)

space available mail (SAM) — Military mail first transported domestically by surface and then to overseas destinations by air on a space-available basis. (See also *surface airlift mail*.)

special delivery — A special service that provides preferential handling in dispatch, transportation, and expedited delivery at destination, which includes Sunday and holiday delivery at certain large city post offices. It is available for every mail class except Express Mail. (See also *preferential mail*.) (Compare with *special handling*.)

special die-hub cancellation — (See *cancellation*.)

special handling — A special service available only for Standard Mail (A) and Standard Mail (B). It provides preferential handling in dispatch and transportation but not expedited delivery. (See also *preferential mail*.) (Compare with *special delivery*.)

special-issue stamp — A postage stamp issued for special purposes (e.g., the annual Christmas stamp). It is typically issued at the current First-Class Mail letter rate and is often available in greater quantities and over longer periods than commemorative stamps. (Compare with *commemorative stamp* and *definitive stamp*.)

special postage payment system — A method that simplifies postage payment procedures for large-volume mailers that meet certain requirements. This includes Alternate Mailing Systems, Centralized Postage Payment System, Manifest Mailing System, Optional Procedure Mailing System, and plant-verified drop shipment.

special rate — One of three preferred rates for Periodicals that require approval and authorization (Classroom rate, Nonprofit rate, and Science-of-Agriculture rate).

special request cancellation — (See *cancellation*.)

special service — A mail service for a fee in addition to required postage, that includes registered mail, certified mail, insured mail, collect on delivery, recorded delivery special delivery, special handling, parcel airlift, business reply mail, and return receipt for merchandise. (See also *postal money order*, *return receipt*, and *restricted delivery*.)

speedy bag — A clear plastic sack used to identify and hold special delivery mail. The bag is then placed inside regular sacks of dispatched mail. It keeps this mail separate from other mail in transit and expedites its delivery.

spike — (informal) (See *verify*.)

stacker — A separation on the sweepside of a letter sorting machine or similar mechanized or automated mail processing equipment that collects letters at one end of a facing table.

stamp, all-purpose dating — (See *all-purpose dating stamp*.)

S

stamp credit — The monetary value of the postage stamp stock that is consigned to an employee or contractor out of the stamp accountability of the postmaster. At post office stations and post office branches, this value is consigned out of the general station or branch stamp credit. (See also *accountable paper*.)

stamp distribution office (SDO) — A postal unit other than the parent sectional center facility that is designated, for security reasons, to supply postage stamp stock to associate post offices.

stamped envelope — An envelope with a preprinted and/or embossed postage imprint.

stamped paper — (See *accountable paper* and *postal stationery*.)

stamp, postage — (See *postage stamp*.)

stamp, postmarking — (See *postmarking stamp*.)

Stamps by Mail (SBM) — A service in which a customer uses a self-mailer order form and pays by check for postage stamps that are delivered with the customer's regular mail. This service is available in most post offices and rural routes. (See also *Easy Stamp Service*.)

stamps to go — A method for customer purchase of postage stamps at consignment outlets (e.g., grocery stores or drug stores) or via ATM machines dispensing stamps.

stamp tagging — (See *tagging*.)

stamp vending machine (SVM) — A vending machine that has multiple modules capable of dispensing varying quantities of stamps from a coil from each module.

standard container mail — Mail transported in air carrier-owned containers on flights scheduled to depart between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m.

Standard Mail — A mail class consisting of mailable matter that is not mailed as First-Class Mail or entered as Periodicals. Standard Mail includes matter formerly classified as third-class and as fourth-class mail. Though combined in Standard Mail, matter from each former class remains subject to separate and specific classification, eligibility, and preparation standards. Matter formerly classified as third-class mail is referred to as Standard Mail (A); matter formerly classified as fourth-class mail is referred to as Standard Mail (B). The unmodified term Standard Mail applies to both former third-class mail and former fourth-class mail.

Standard Mail (A) — Standard Mail matter that weighs less than 16 ounces. It comprises the subclasses of Regular Standard Mail, Nonprofit Standard Mail, Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail, Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail, and Single-Piece Standard Mail. These subclasses include circulars, printed matter, pamphlets, catalogs, newsletters, direct mail, and merchandise. Standard Mail (A) may be sent at presorted rates and at automation rates.

Standard Mail (B) — Usually Standard Mail matter that weighs 16 ounces or more. It comprises four subclasses: Bound Printed Matter, Library Mail, Parcel Post, and Special Standard Mail.

standpoint scheme — A scheme used by an international exchange office for the labeling and routing of international mail.

star route — (obsolete) Informal designation for a highway contract route based on the former practice of marking contract routes with asterisks on dispatch schedules.

state case — A case for separating mail according to city destination in a single state.

state dispatch list — A roster that shows dispatch of state mail to post offices or terminals best equipped, staffed, or located to perform the distribution. (Also called *massing scheme*.)

statement of account — A postal form (Form 1555) used for financial reporting by accounting period or postal quarter.

station — (See *post office station*.)

S

step increase — An advancement from one step to the next within a specific grade of a position. It is dependent on performance and tenure. (Also called *periodic step increase*.)

storage conveyor — A conveyor on which nonpreferential mail can be held for a brief period.

storage vehicle — A vehicle retired from service and awaiting sale.

strap out — To bundle letters and flats with straps or rubber bands, keeping them in delivery sequence. (See also *tie out*.)

strategic planning — The top USPS management decision process that focuses on the longer range direction of the Postal Service and establishes the means by which that direction is reached. It includes the definition of missions and objectives — how the Postal Service enterprise sees its purpose and where it wants to go. Strategic planning provides the basic direction and focus of the organization, the big picture. Some of the organization's basic strategic decisions might relate to questions such as: What business are we in? What business should we be in, now and in the future? What should be the geographical scope of operations? What are our research and development goals? How should products be researched? Where are we the weakest? Strongest?

stringer — A pouch or sack hung loose on the outside of regular sacks. The term also refers to a sack with a broken drawstring.

string- or twine-tying machine — A machine, operated by a foot pedal, that mechanically ties bundles of letters or flats.

strip label — (See *label*.)

stuck — (informal) Having more mail than can be completely distributed prior to scheduled dispatch or letter carrier leaving time, as in "go stuck."

subclass — A subdivision of a mail class, usually based on the consideration of a physical characteristic rather than content.

Supervisory Training System (STS) — A national training program for newly appointed field supervisors.

supplemental mail service — A mail service that usually supplements a special service. These include restricted delivery and return receipt.

supplementary mail service — (See *supplemental mail service*.)

supply — The mode, method, or route by which a given post office or locality receives its mail.

surcharge — An additional fee for nonstandard size mail or certain nonmachinable parcels.

surface airlift mail — A combined mode of transporting international mail and military mail by surface and air. (See also *International Surface Air Lift and space available mail*.)

surface mail — In international mail, mail that is transported by any mode other than air (that is, sea, rail, or highway).

surface preferential mail — First-Class Mail and Periodicals, as well as Standard Mail that bears a prepaid special delivery fee or special handling fee.

surge conveyor — A part of the mail conveying system that holds back surges and meters out an even flow, keeping all mail in sequence. (See also *conveyor*.)

suspense account — An account containing accounts receivable, monies owed to the Postal Service by others.

sweep — (See *pull*.)

sweeper — A clerk who removes the mail from the bins or stackers on mechanical and automated mail processing equipment and then places it in the equipment for dispatch.

sweepside — The side of the machine where sorted mail ends up after being processed by the equipment.

swing — A short period of time required to cover an absence.

swing room — The lounge used when employees are off the clock or on break.

swing time — The period that employees spend in non-work-related activities (for example, lunch or coffee breaks).



systems engineering — The process of selecting and putting into a unified pattern the devices, mechanisms, and equipment necessary for optimum operation and control of a complex mail processing or customer service system.

tag — A piece of cardboard or plastic that is attached to a pouch, sack, or tray. It is usually in addition to the container label and is printed in various colors and provides information on contents, mail class and sortation type, routing instructions, and specific handling information.

tagging — A process of coating a postage stamp with an invisible phosphorus additive that glows when exposed to ultraviolet light. Mail processing equipment recognizes the tagged stamp and then can automatically face the envelope and cancel the stamp. (See also *facer-canceler* and *hot stamp*.)

tailboard delivery — The delivery of mail to a vehicle at the platform and subsequent acceptance at that point.

tailgate exchange — The transfer of mail between two postal or contract vehicles at an intersecting highway point rather than at a postal facility. (See also *highway contract route*.)

tap — (informal) To gather mail from a collection box.

team roles — Modeling is a team effort. Each USPS BPR team member must be assigned one or more roles to ensure that the team meets its objectives. Some of the roles require a full-time effort; they are called the core team roles. Other roles require part-time or as-needed effort; they are referred to as the extended team roles.

Technical Training Center (TTC) — A facility at Norman, OK, that provides instruction in the maintenance and repair of postal equipment, systems, vehicles, and facilities.

terminal — A postal processing facility (at an airport mail center/facility or at a railroad or truck terminal) for the consolidation, distribution, and dispatch of mail.

terminal charge — The amount charged for services, such as loading and unloading, performed by carriers at an airport mail center/facility and railroad or truck terminal.

terminal dues — The charge levied by the destination country to cover the costs incurred for delivering international mail received. These charges are levied according to Article 49 of the Convention of the Universal Postal Union. (See also *transit charge*.)

T

terminal handling — Any activity to receive, sort, route, and dispatch sacks, pouches, and outsides at an airport mail center/facility and railroad or a truck terminal.

tertiary — A third mail sorting operation. (Compare with *primary* and *secondary*.)

third-class mail — (obsolete) (See *Standard Mail (A)*.)

throughput — The rate at which a machine processes mail, usually designated in pieces per hour.

throwback — Miscased or missorted mail that has been reworked for accurate distribution. (See also *missort/missorted mail*.)

throwback case — A distribution case in a delivery unit for the sortation of missorted and forwardable letters and flats. (See also *undeliverable as addressed*.)

throwoff pouch — An emptied pouch whose contents have been sorted into other pouches.

tie out — To stop sorting letters and flats and to tie or band each separation made. (See also *strap out*.)

timesharing services — Data processing services provided to post offices through computer terminals by either an accounting service center or a private company.

TO-BE models — Models that are the result of applying improvement opportunities to the current (AS-IS) USPS business environment. (See also *activity model (AS-IS)*.)

ton-mile — One ton transported 1 mile.

top cap — Material that forms a flat, level surface horizontal to the base of a pallet that is used to protect the integrity of the mail under the top cap while also supporting a loaded pallet above. A top cap must be secured to a pallet with either stretchwrap or at least two crossed straps or bands.

topical — A postage stamp collected by subject or theme (such as flowers or athletic events).

tour — One of three scheduled USPS shifts: Tour I (usually from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.) is the night shift, Tour II is the daytime shift (usually from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.), and Tour III is the evening shift (usually from 3 to 11 p.m.).

tour of duty — A USPS employee's scheduled duty hours during a workday or workweek. (Also called *shift* or *trick*.)

towveyor — (See *Container Transport System*.)

tracer — A form (Form 1510, *Mail Loss/Rifling Report*) that customers fill out to locate delayed or undelivered mail.

tractor-trailer — A combination vehicle for hauling large volumes of mail. The operator must be licensed and authorized to drive this type of vehicle.

trailer-on-flatcar service (TOFC) — A mail trailer transported on a special railroad flatcar. (Also called *pig* or *piggyback*.)

tram — A six-wheel platform truck for transporting sacked mail, trayed mail, and outsides (packages and parcels). (Also called *float* or *nutting truck*.)

transfer — Mail that receives first handling outside the receiving postal facility. In this case, the mail is for delivery outside the facility and requires only onward dispatch without opening.

transfer post office (TPO) — A service unit, usually located at a main postal truck or railroad terminal or airport mail center/facility, where the transfer of mail between carriers is complicated, voluminous, and requires supervision.

transit — Mail received from other post offices and handled for redistribution.

transit charge — A fee levied by one country for transporting, through its system, mail destined for and belonging to another country. (See also *terminal dues*.)

Transportation Management System (TMS) — A computer system that organizes, standardizes, and streamlines the administration of USPS transportation operations.

tray — An open container for holding letter-size mail or flat-size mail. It has a flat bottom and four or three sides and is made of cardboard (sleeved) or plastic (unsleeved). Also, to place mail in a tray for mail processing or dispatching functions. (See also *managed mail tray*.)

T

tray cart — A heavy-duty, wheeled container with fixed-steel mesh shelving, designed to hold standard USPS letter trays and flat trays. (Also called *bread tray*, *pie cart*, or *pie rack*.)

trick — (informal) (See *tour of duty*.)

truck — (See *log*.)

truck schedule — The set departure and arrival times for a vehicle at each postal unit, depot, boat dock, terminal, or other point.

truck terminal — A postal facility where mail transported, or to be transported, on highway contract routes is received, sorted, and dispatched.

trust account — (See *advance deposit account*.)

turnback mail — (See *return mail*.)

twine-tying machine — (See *string- or twine-tying machine*.)

two-pass — Method used in automation (for example, delivery barcode sorter) to sort mail to the sector, segment, or letter carrier walk-sequence level.

uncoded — Mail on which the delivery address does not include a ZIP Code. (Also called *unzipped*.)

undeliverable as addressed (UAA) — Mail that the USPS cannot deliver as addressed and must forward to the addressee, return to the sender, or send to a mail recovery center (depending on treatment authorized for that mail class). (See also *address correction service*, *Computerized Forwarding System II*, *markup*, *nixie*, *return address*, *throwback case*, and *tracer*.)

unique ZIP Code — A ZIP Code assigned to a company, government agency, or entity with sufficient mail volume, based on average daily volume of letter-size mail received, availability of ZIP Code numbers in the postal area, and USPS cost-benefit analyses.

unit reserve stock — All postage stamps, postal stationery, nonpostal stamps, and philatelic products received by the window unit of a main post office, post office station, or post office branch but not yet consigned to a clerk.

United States Code (USC) — The official restatement of the general and permanent laws of the United States; title 39 USC contains laws relating to the USPS.

United States Postal Service (USPS) — An independent agency of the executive branch, the USPS was established on July 1, 1971, by the Postal Reorganization Act, when it became the successor to the Post Office Department. The USPS logo is a USPS trademark.

Universal Postal Union (UPU) — An international postal organization that is a specialized agency of the United Nations. Its 189 member countries form a single postal territory for the reciprocal exchange of letter-post items. Its Convention establishes the common rules applicable to the international postal service and the provisions governing letter-post services.

untied dispatch — Loose letter-size mail or flat-size mail packed in a sack, pouch, or letter tray or flat tray for direct dispatch to destinations.

U

upgradable mail — First-Class Mail and Standard Mail (A) that the USPS can process on a multiline optical character reader (MLOCR) to apply a barcode. Upgradable mail is letter-size, automation-compatible mail, with machine-printed nonscript addresses, an OCR read area and a barcode clear zone meeting reflectance requirements, and paper that can accept ink. Preparation of upgradable pieces is usually simpler than the preparation of nonupgradable (non-OCR) mail.

U.S. Savings Stamp — (See *nonpostal stamp*.)

unzipped — (See *uncoded*.)

upside down — (See *smiles, frowns, and upside downs*.)

utility carrier — A full-time city carrier who is assigned to a delivery unit to back up absent carriers.

valentine — A test card that delivery supervisors leave in collection boxes to ensure that mail is pulled on schedule.

value added refund — The postage returned by the USPS to an authorized mailer who prepares First-Class Mail or bulk rate Standard Mail (A) for customers and adds value to the mail by sorting it to a finer level or moving it to an automation category. The USPS gives a refund to the mailer for postage affixed to the mail in excess of the rate applicable to the value added category.

VALUEPOST™ /CANADA — A bulk service for regular printed matter, books and sheet music, publishers' periodicals, and small packets. To qualify for this mail class, the mailer must sort and prepare mail according to specifications. VALUEPOST is a USPS trademark.

variable cost — A cost element that varies directly with the amount of product or service produced by an activity or cost. Variable costs go to zero if the activity stops. (See also *fixed cost*.)

vehicle hire contract — An agreement between the USPS and an employee for the use of the employee's privately owned vehicle for city delivery. (See also *drive-out agreement*.)

vehicle maintenance facility (VMF) — A USPS repair shop and garage that maintains USPS vehicles and that provides support documents for vehicle cost and accounting reports.

Vehicle Management Accounting System (VMAS) — A cost-accounting system that provides information on operating costs per vehicle, per mile, and per hour.

vehicle time — The length of time per mile and per hour a postal or contract vehicle is used for city delivery.

Vending Activity Reporting System (VARs) — A data collection system that collects information from "communicating" machines and hand-held data collection devices. Information is sent to a host computer for servicing and management purposes.

verification — The procedural checks of a mailing presented by a mailer to determine proper preparation and postage payment.



Verification Note/Bulletin of Verification (VN/BV) — In international mail, the form (Form 2971/8108 or UPU Form CP 78 (formerly CP 13)) used by the receiving international exchange office to notify the dispatching international exchange office of irregularities or errors in a dispatch of mail.

verify — To check either the proper destination of mail by piece-by-piece examination or the rates claimed on a postage statement with the actual mailing it accompanies. (See also *plant-verified drop shipment*.) (Also called *spike*.)

vertical improved mail (VIM) — A mail service within high-rise office buildings. The letter carrier provides delivery and collection of mail for the entire building by operating a small elevator from a mailroom or by using a call window or a centralized mail delivery system.

vice president (VP) — A USPS officer who is appointed by the postmaster general and directs the various USPS functional departments and area offices.

Voice of the Business (VOB) — An assessment involving traditional measures of financial success to determine which progress is possible and desirable taking into consideration the current health of the business, opportunities in the market, and strength of the competition.

Voice of the Customer (VOC) — An assessment of customer needs and desires in the markets USPS serves and their satisfaction with services relative to other service available in those markets.

Voice of the Employee (VOE) — An assessment of USPS employee issues that will strengthen the company, shape the business future, and improve employees' role in its success.

Volume Arrival Profile (VAP) — A series of computer programs that analyze data transferred from the information systems service centers. The data is averaged to provide the Post Office Scheduler system with the necessary records to make up an arrival profile for all Management Operating Data System (MODS) operations.

walk sequence — The order in which a city carrier delivers mail for a route. This order is required for most carrier route presort mail.

water-activated adhesive — The gum that requires moisture to perform on stamps. This is the alternative to self-adhesive.

way pouch — A pouch containing mail for post offices along a certain route. It is opened at each office to remove local mail and add mail from that office to other destinations on the route.

weight count — (See *piece count*.)

wide area barcode reader (WABCR) — A modification to a barcode sorter that allows the machine to read a barcode virtually anywhere on a mailpiece.

window envelope — An envelope with one or two openings (cutouts) on the address side through which a delivery address or barcode printed on the letter or insert placed in the envelope can be read. The openings must be covered with transparent material (such as glassine) for certain types of mail (such as registered mail).

wing case — An extension added to a case that protrudes at an angle on either side of the main case.

WKG — A code used on container labels identifying the contents as mail that requires further processing.

worked — Sorted mail ready for dispatch.

Work Hour Management (WHM) — A computer program used to plan and track performance over short periods (such as a tour, day, week, or accounting period) and to facilitate the making of immediate decisions.

workhour report — (See *National Workhour Report*.)

working pouch — A pouch of First-Class Mail for distribution at the unit of address.

workroom floor — The part of a postal facility where employees handle, sort, and dispatch mail.

workup — To complete distribution.



zero bin — On the multiposition letter sorting machine, the bin that accumulates letters that bypassed a full bin, were not keyed by the operator or otherwise keyed during dead-cycle time, or did not drop into the bin for which they were coded (owing to machine malfunction).

ZIP Code — The five-digit numeric code of which the first three digits identify the delivery area of a sectional center facility or a major-city post office serving the delivery address area. The next two (the fourth and fifth) digits identify the delivery area of an associate post office, post office branch, or post office station. All post offices are assigned at least one unique 5-digit code. ZIP Code is a USPS trademark. (See also *two-pass* and *Zone Improvement Plan*.)

ZIP+4 — The nine-digit numeric code, established in 1981, composed of two parts: (a) The initial code: the first five digits that identify the sectional center facility and delivery area associated with the address, followed by a hyphen; and (b) the four-digit expanded code: the first two additional digits designate the sector and the last two digits designate the segment. ZIP+4 is a USPS trademark.

ZIP+4 barcode — A nine-digit POSTNET barcode consisting of 52 vertical bars. (See also *POSTal Numeric Encoding Technique*.)

ZIP+4 code — The numeric representation of ZIP+4 as opposed to the POSTNET representation as a barcode.

ZIP+4 National File Directory Tapes — Address records that contain the ZIP+4 codes for all delivery points, in an electronic form.

ZIP+4 State Directory — A series of publications organized by state that shows all ZIP+4 code assignments in each state.

ZIP mail translator (ZMT) — An attachment for a letter sorting machine. It translates the operator's keystrokes into instructions that enable the machine to send the letter into the correct bin.

zone — A number that expresses the distance that a zone rate mailpiece must travel from point of entry to point of delivery. It is based on the air mileage along a great circle line between three-digit ZIP Code prefix areas of dispatch and receipt. This mileage range is converted to a zone number. The USPS uses eight numbered postal zones and one local zone for computing postage on mail.



zone chart — A table that shows the zone number between three-digit ZIP Code prefix areas.

Zone Improvement Plan (ZIP) — Established in 1963, a nationwide system of five-digit codes that identify the individual post office or a metropolitan delivery area associated with the address. This system expanded the older city zone concept that used two-digit numbers to identify local delivery units. (Also called *ZIP Code*.)

zoned rate — A rate structure for certain Standard Mail (B) and all Periodicals and Priority Mail, based on weight and distance traveled (or zones crossed).

Abbreviations and Acronyms

A

AADC	automated area distribution center
ABE	Automated Barcode Evaluator
ABMPS	Automated Business Mail Processing System
AC	actual count
ACDCS	Air Contract Data Collection System
ACS	Address Change Service
ACT	air contract transportation tag
ADAPT	Automatic Density Analysis Profile Technique
ADC	area distribution center
AE	additional entry
AFC	advanced facer-canceler
AIC	account identifier code
AM	Address Management
AMC/F	airport mail center/facility
AMO	area maintenance office
AMS	Alternate Mailing System
AO	associate post office
AO	autres objets (other articles)

AOI

BRMAS

AOI	associate office infrastructure
AP	accounting period
APARS	Accounts Payable Accounting and Reporting System
APO	Army Post Office
APS	Adjustment Processing System
ARM	accelerated reply mail
ASC	accounting service center
ASF	administrative support facility
ASF	auxiliary service facility
AS-IS	activity model
ASM	Administrative Support Manual

B

BBM	bulk business mail
BC	barcode
BCR	barcode reader
BCS	barcode sorter
BMC	bulk mail center
BMC	bulk mail center container
BMEU	business mail entry unit
BPI	business process improvement
BPM	Bound Printed Matter
BRM	business reply mail
BRMAS	Business Reply Mail Accounting System

C

CAG	cost ascertainment grouping
CAKT	computer-assisted keyboard training
CAS	Case Analysis System
CASS	Coding Accuracy Support System
CAST	computer-assisted scheme training
CDB	Corporate Data Base
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CFS II	Computerized Forwarding System II
CIIS	Comprehensive-Interactive Information Strategy
CIS	Corporate Information System
CMA	commercial mailing agent
CMRA	commercial mail receiving agency
CMRS	Computerized Meter Resetting System
COD	collect on delivery
CODES	Computerized On-Site Data Entry System
COR	contracting officer representative
COSC	computer operations service center
CP	colis postaux
CPO	community post office
CPP	Centralized Postage Payment System
CR	carrier route
CRF	Central Repair Facility
CRIS	Carrier Route Information System

CRM

EIS

CRM courtesy reply mail

CSI Customer Satisfaction Index

D

DAL detached address label

DAS Density Analysis System

DBMC destination bulk mail center

DDE/DR Distributed Data Entry and Distributed Reporting

DDU destination delivery unit

DMCS Domestic Mail Classification Schedule

DMM Domestic Mail Manual

DMU detached mail unit

DNO distribution networks office

DPBC delivery point barcode

DPMG deputy postmaster general

DPO designated post office

DSCF destination sectional center facility

E

EAP Employee Assistance Program

EAS executive and administrative schedule

ECB Engineering Change Board

EEO Equal Employment Opportunity

EI/QWL Employee Involvement/Quality of Work Life

EIS Executive Information System

ELM

FSO

ELM	Employee and Labor Relations Manual
EMMS	Express Mail Military Service
EMRS	Electronic Marketing Reporting System
EMS	Express Mail International Service
EPO	entry post office
ERMC	eastern region mail container
ESP	electronic sort processor

F

FCM	First-Class Mail
FDC	first day cover
FEDSTRIP	Federal Standard Requisitioning and Issue Procedures
FHP	first handling pieces
FIM	facing identification mark
FLTS	FLATS
FMM	Financial Management Manual
FMO	field maintenance offices
FPI	functional process improvement
FPO	Fleet Post Office
FR	Federal Register
FSM	flat sorting machine
FSO	facilities service office

G

GMS	general mail system
GPL	Global Package Link
GPM	Global Priority Mail
GPMC	general purpose mail container

H

HASP	Hub and Spoke Program
HCR	highway contract route

I

IBRS	International Business Reply Service
IEO	international exchange office
IMM	International Mail Manual
IMPAC	International Merchant Purchase Authorization Card
IMPC	incoming mail processing center
INTELPOST	International Electronic Post
IPA	International Priority Airmail
IPCS	International Package Consignment Service
IPP	irregular parcels and pieces
IRT	integrated retail terminal
ISAL	International Surface Air Lift
ISBN	International Standard Book Number
ISC	information service center

ISSC

MASS

ISSC	information systems service center
ISSN	International Standard Serial Number
ISSP	Incoming Secondary Sorting Program
IT	Information Technology
ITK	Infrastructure Tool Kit

J

K

L

LA	LA lock
LC	lettres et cartes (letters and cards)
LDC	labor distribution code
LF	lead facilitator
LID	luminescent indicia detector
LLV	long-life vehicle
LOT	Line-of-Travel
LPC	Label Printing Center
LSM	letter sorting machine
LTATS	Loan, Transfer, and Training System
LUR	Labor Utilization Report

M

MASS	Multiline Accuracy Support System
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MCM

MTTR

MCM	multicommodity machine
MDC	material distribution center
MEPPS	Multiple Entry Point Payment System
MI	management instruction
MIP-SOP	Methods Improvement Program — Standard Operating Procedures
MLOCR	multiline optical character reader
MM	managed mail tray
MMP	Managed Mail Program
MMS	Manifest Mailing System
MODS	Management Operating Data System
MOM	military ordinary mail
MPFSM	multiposition flat sorting machine
MPLSM	multiposition letter sorting machine
MPO	military post office
MPWCS	Mail Processing Work Credit System
MQC	Mailpiece Quality Control
MRB	management review board
MRC	mail recovery center
MSC	management sectional center
MSSP	Manpower Scheduling and Staffing Program
MTAC	Mailers Technical Advisory Committee
MTE	mail transport equipment
MTEC	mail transport equipment center
MTTR	mean time to repair

MVO

OEL

MVO motor vehicle operator

MVRF mobile vehicle repair facility

N

NAM national account manager

NASS National Air and Surface System

NBMS National Bulk Mail System

NBS National Budget System

NCD non-city delivery office

NCOA National Change of Address System

NCSC National Customer Support Center

NDCBU neighborhood delivery and collection box unit

NDI National Deliverability Index

NMO nonmachinable outside

NNSC National Network Service Center

NO no office

NSN National Stock Number

NTAC National Test Administration Center

NWR National Workhour Report

NWRS National Workhour Reporting System

O

OCR/CS optical character reader/channel sorter

ODIS Origin Destination Information System

OEL optional endorsement line

OFM

PM

OFM	On-Line File Maintenance
OIC	officer in charge
OLQ	On-Line Query
OMAS	Official Mail Accounting System
OMSS	Organizational Management Staffing System
OP	Optional Procedure Mailing System
OPF	official personnel folder
OTR	over-the-road container

P

PAL	Parcel Airlift
PAL	Postal Answer Line
PAR	Program for Alcoholic Recovery
PAU	platform acceptance unit
PAVE	Presort Accuracy Validation and Evaluation
PBC	postal business center
PCC	Postal Customer Council Program
PCE	Postal Computing Environment
PCES	Postal Career Executive Service
PCM	postal commodity machine
PDC/F	processing and distribution center/facility
PEDC	postal employee development center
PIRS	Productivity Information Reporting System
PM	project manager

PMC

PVS

PMC	Postage and Mailing Center
PMG	postmaster general
PMSC	purchasing and materials service center
PO	post office
POM	Postal Operations Manual
POP	point of purchase promotions
POS	Point of Sale System
POSKED	Post Office Scheduler
POSTNET	POSTal Numeric Encoding Technique
PR	poste restante
PRC	Postal Rate Commission
PRN	postal routed network
PS	Postal Service schedule
PSDS	Postal Source Data System
PSFR	Postal System Financial Report
PSM	parcel sorting machine
PSO	procurement service office
PSSR	Postal System Sales Report
PST&DI	Postal Service Training and Development Institute
PVDS	plant-verified drop shipment
PVI	postage validation imprinter
PVS	postal vehicle service

QA

SPO

Q

QA quality assurance
QC quality control
QSI Quality Step Increase

R

RAP Retail Analysis Program
RAPS Rural Adjustment Processing System
RCA rural carrier associate
RCSC rates and classification service center
RPW Revenue, Pieces, and Weight
RR rural route
RTAPS Rural Time and Attendance System

S

SAM space available mail
SBM Stamps by Mail
SCF sectional center facility
SDO stamp distribution office
SIS Short-Interval Scheduler
SPBS small parcel and bundle sorter
SPLSM single-position letter sorting machine
SPLY same period last year
SPO serving post office

S/SIS

VIM

S/SIS	Sales/Service Information System
SSIS	Schedules and Schemes Information System
SSM	sack sorting machine
SSPC	self-service postal center
SPR	small parcels and rolls
STS	Supervisory Training System
SV	sacs vides (empty mail bags)
SVM	stamp vending machine

T

TMS	Transportation Management System
TO-BE	activity model
TOFC	trailer-on-flatcar service
TPO	transfer post office
TQM	total quality management
TTC	Technical Training Center

U

UAA	undeliverable as addressed
UPU	Universal Postal Union
USPS	United States Postal Service

V

VARS	Vending Activity Reporting System
VIM	vertical improved mail

VMAS

ZMT

VMAS Vehicle Management Accounting System

VMF vehicle maintenance facility

VN/BV Verification Note/Bulletin of Verification

VOB Voice of the Business

VOC Voice of the Customer

VOE Voice of the Employee

VP vice president

VAP Volume Arrival Profile

W

WABCR wide area barcode reader

WHM Work Hour Management

WKG WORKING

X

Y

Z

ZIP Zone Improvement Plan

ZMT ZIP mail translator